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The Vocation of Man

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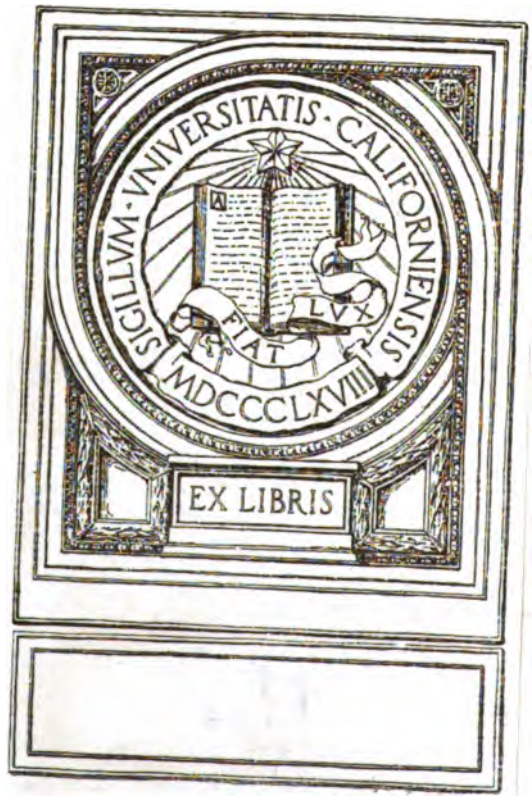
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THE VOCATION OF MAN

BY

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE.

TRANSLATED BY

WILLIAM SMITH, L.L.D.

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION BY

E. RITCHIE, PH. D.

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INTRODUCTION.

"Whatever is great and good in our own age is wholly due to this, that noble and strong men in the past have for the sake of ideas made sacrifice of all the enjoyments of life." This statement of Fichte's is indicative at once of the spirit that pervaded his philosophy and of the principles that governed his life. For him "the idea" was supreme, and the philosopher's life and work the noblest of all careers; but that life and that work had true significance and value only because they led humanity to ever loftier and purer heights. Like Carlyle, who learned so much from him, Fichte perhaps overestimated the part played by the moral hero in the spiritual evolution of the race, and we must admit that his own character was not free from the combativeness and obstinacy which so often accompany great intensity of conviction, yet both in his doctrine and his life his individualism retained always its uplifting and regenerating power. If his opinions were held stubbornly and sometimes promulgated dogmatically, they were ever warmed and illuminated by an ardent moral enthusiasm. Few are the earnest students of speculative thought who after a thorough study of his works will give their unqualified assent to his system as a whole, but perhaps fewer still will fail to glean something of value for thinking and living from the harvest of his philosophy.

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Johann Gottlieb Fichte was born on the 19th of May, 1762, at the village of Rammenau in Saxon Lusatia. He was the son of Christian Fichte, a descendant of one of Gustavus Adolphus's soldiers, who made a poor living by making and selling linen ribbons. Anecdotes told of the boy's precocious intelligence, his conscientiousness and his stubbornness, show that in Fichte's case the child was "father of the man." A landowner of the neighbourhood undertook to educate him, and he was sent to the well-known school at Pforta near Naumberg. At first the proud and reserved boy suffered much from the tyranny of the older lads, but later his school life seems to have grown happier. To his school-days succeeded years of acute poverty and hard study as a theological student at Jena and Leipzig. Unable from lack of means to complete his course he engaged as a tutor in various private families. In this capacity he came to Zurich, where he became acquainted with Hartmann Rahn, a brother-in-law of Klopstock. To Rahn's daughter, Johanna, Fichte was at once attracted, and a strong love, destined to prove life-long, sprang up between them. Fitche's temper was too proud and his ideas on education were too original to make him generally acceptable as a tutor, and he seldom kept a situation long. In 1790 he first studied Kant's philosophy, which caused an entire revolution in his own philosophic ideas. Hitherto a somewhat unwilling adherent of the doctrine of determinism, he believed he had found in the critical system a way of escape, and henceforth he maintained the doctrine of moral freedom with ever-increasing fervour of conviction. The next year he went to Königsberg to visit Kant, but he seems to have met with a recep-

tion which, though not uncivil, was somewhat cold and reserved. Shortly after he published the Critique of Revelation, which is thoroughly Kantian in spirit and method; and the author's name having been accidentally omitted from the title-page it was received and warmly welcomed as a work from the old philosopher's own hand. When Fichte's authorship was disclosed his reputation was made; and the success of the book enabled Fichte to marry Johanna Rahn in the autumn of 1793. The progress of the French Revolution led Fichte to publish a number of tracts in which the rights of the people were established on the basis of the inherent moral freedom of man. These increased his fame, though they caused him to be regarded by conservatives as a dangerous and radical teacher. In 1794 he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at Jena, then at the zenith of its renown. Here his success as a lecturer was remarkable, but difficulties soon occurred both with unruly students and with the authorities. Owing to an article published in the Philosophical Journal, of which he was editor, a cry of atheism was raised against him, the Saxon Government condemning the "Journal" and demanding the expulsion of Fichte. The Grand Duke of Weimar would have settled the matter by a formal censure, but Fichte would not submit to any semblance of interference with liberty of teaching; and the affair ended with his dismissal from the University. He repaired to Berlin, where he was warmly welcomed by Schelling, the Schlegels, Schleiermacher and other literary men, but the loose morality and vague sentimentality of the Romanticists suited neither Fichte nor his wife, and the friendship gave way to coldness and in some cases to hos-

tility. Meanwhile he continued to develop and expound his philosophy in writings and lectures. In 1805 he became professor at Erlangen, but owing to the unfortunate issue of the war with France he felt obliged to exile himself to East Prussia. Returning to Berlin in 1807 he there delivered his celebrated "Addresses to the German People," in which with splendid effect he called upon his fellow countrymen to regenerate and revivify their fatherland. On the foundation of the University of Berlin Fichte threw himself ardently into the scheme of its organization, and in 1811 he was appointed Rector; but his imperious and insistent temper made it difficult for others to work with him, and he soon resigned the position. He continued to lecture on philosophic and patriotic themes during the stormy years of 1812 and 1813. In the opening days of 1814 his wife caught a fever through her attendance upon the sick and wounded who filled the Berlin hospital. Fichte nursed her assiduously, but as she recovered he took the disease and after a short illness died January 27, 1814. On his tomb was written the appropriate and beautiful text: "Thy teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars that shine for ever and ever."

The philosophical system of Fichte cannot be adequately apprehended save by a prolonged and careful study not only of his own works but of the Kantian philosophy of which it is an off-shoot. More perhaps than any other speculative theory it is a pure and self-consistent idealism; and in spite of the sincere and deep conviction of its creator, that it suffices for the

due interpretation of reality, it will always seem to many thinkers too abstract and subjective to serve as an illumination to the concrete and many-sided facts of actual experience. But such a criticism would hardly apply to the work known as "The Vocation of Man." In it we have much, indeed, of Fichte's philosophy, but little of his system-building. His language, moreover, is clear and untechnical, while the metaphysical ideas he promulgates are animated by the strongly personal note and vivified by the glowing intensity of passionate moral conviction that were so characteristic of the man himself. The student familiar with the history of philosophy will find in this little book much that throws light upon other systems, especially on those of Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer and our own modern "pragmatists," but earnest readers even if unacquainted with the speculations of the schools may also gain from it no meagre store of noble and inspiring thoughts.

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PREFACE.

WHATEVER in the more recent Philosophy is useful beyond the limits of the schools will form the contents of this work, set forth in that order in which it would naturally present itself to unscientific thought. The more profound arguments by which subtle objections and extravagances of over-refined minds are to be met, whatever is but the foundation of other Positive Science,—and lastly, whatever belongs to Pedagogy in its widest sense, that is, to the deliberate and arbitrary Education of the Human Race,—shall remain beyond the limits of our task. These objections are not made by the natural understanding;—Positive Science it leaves to Scholars by profession; and the Education of the Human Race, in so far as that depends upon human effort, to its appointed Teachers and Statesmen.

This book is therefore not intended for philosophers by profession, who will find nothing in it that has not been already set forth in other writings of the same author. It ought to be intelligible to all readers who are able to understand a book at all. To those who wish only to repeat, in somewhat varied order, certain phrases which they have already learned by rote, and who mistake this business of the memory for understanding, it will doubtless be found unintelligible.

It ought to attract and animate the reader, and to

elevate him from the world of sense into a region of transcendental thought;—at least the author is conscious that he has not entered upon his task without such inspiration. Often indeed, the fire with which we commence an undertaking disappears during the toil of execution; and thus, at the conclusion of a work, we are in danger of doing ourselves injustice upon this point. In short, whether the author has succeeded in attaining his object or not, can be determined only by the effect which the work shall produce on the readers to whom it is addressed, and in this the author has no voice.

I must, however, remind my reader that the "I" who speaks in this book is not the author himself; but it is his earnest wish that the reader should himself assume this character, and that he should not rest contented with a mere historical apprehension of what is here said, but that during reading he should really and truly hold converse with himself, deliberate, draw conclusions and form resolutions, like his imaginary representative, and thus, by his own labour and reflection, develop and build up within himself that mode of thought the mere picture of which is presented to him in the book.

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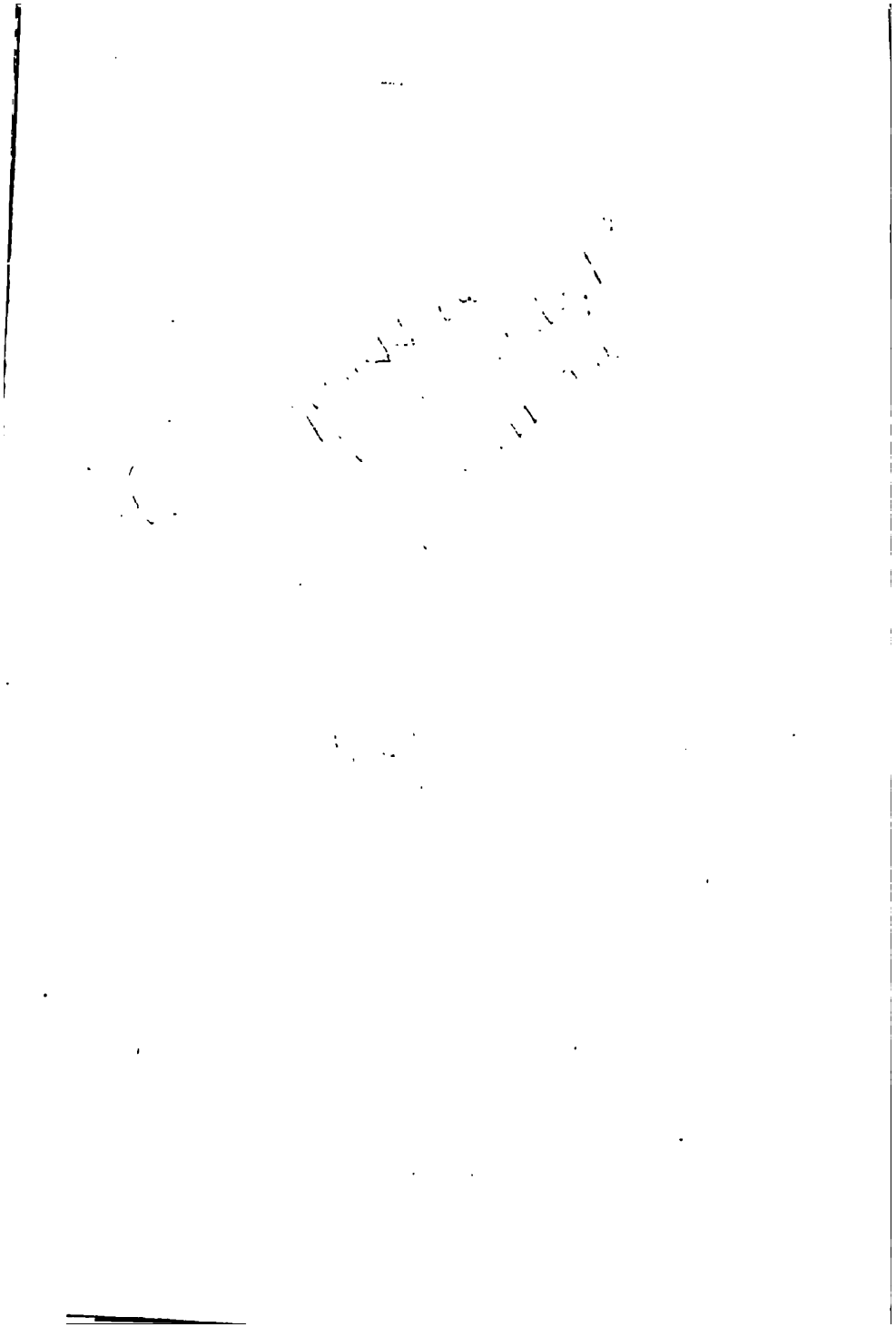

BOOK I.

DOUBT.

I BELIEVE that I am now acquainted with no inconsiderable part of the world that surrounds me, and I have certainly employed sufficient labour and care in the acquisition of this knowledge. I have put faith only in the concurrent testimony of my senses, only in repeated and unvarying experience;—what I have beheld, I have touched—what I have touched, I have analyzed;—I have repeated my observations again and again; I have compared the various phenomena with each other; and only when I could understand their mutual connexion, when I could explain and deduce the one from the other, when I could calculate the result beforehand, and the observation of the result had proved the accuracy of my calculations, have I been satisfied. Therefore I am now as well assured of the accuracy of this part of my knowledge as of my own existence; I walk with a firm step in these understood spheres of my world, and do actually every moment venture welfare and life itself on the certainty of my convictions.

But—what am I myself, and what is my vocation?

Superfluous question! It is long since I have been completely instructed upon these points, and it would take much time to repeat all that I have learned, learned, and believed concerning them.

And in what way then have I attained this knowledge, which I have this dim remembrance of acquiring? Have I, impelled by a burning desire of knowledge, toiled on through uncertainty, doubt and contradiction?—have I, when any belief was presented to me, withheld my assent until I had examined and reëxamined, sifted and compared it,—until an inward voice proclaimed to me, irresistibly and without the possibility of doubt,—"Thus it is—thus only—as surely as thou livest and art!" No! I remember no such state of mind. Those instructions were bestowed on me before I sought them, the answers were given before I had put the questions. I heard, for I could not avoid doing so, and what was taught me remained in my memory just as chance had disposed it;—without examination and without interest I allowed everything to take its place in my mind.

How then could I persuade myself that I possessed any real knowledge upon these matters? If I know that only of which I am convinced, which I have myself discovered, myself experienced, then I cannot truly say that I possess even the slightest knowledge of my vocation;—I know only what others assert they know about it, and all that I am really sure of is,—that I have heard this or that said upon the subject.

Thus, while I have inquired for myself, with the most anxious care, into comparatively trivial matters, I have relied wholly on the care and fidelity of others in things of the weightiest importance. I have attributed to others an interest in the highest affairs of humanity, an earnestness and an exactitude, which I

by no means discovered in myself. I have esteemed them indescribably higher than myself.

Whatever truth they really possess, whence can they have obtained it but through their own reflection? And why may not I, by means of the same reflection, discover the like truth for myself, since I too have a being as well as they? How much have I hitherto undervalued and slighted myself!

It shall be no longer thus. From this moment I will enter on my rights and assume the dignity that belongs to me. Let all foreign aids be cast aside! I will examine for myself. If any secret wishes concerning the result of my inquiries, any partial leaning towards certain conclusions, stir within me, I forget and renounce them; and I will accord them no influence over the direction of my thoughts. I will perform my task with firmness and integrity; —I will honestly accept the result whatever it may be. What I find to be truth, let it sound as it may, shall be welcome to me. I will *know*. With the same certainty with which I am assured that this ground will support me when I tread on it, that this fire will burn me if I approach too near it, will I know what I am, and what I shall be. And should it prove impossible for me to know this, then I will know this much at least, that I cannot know it. Even to this conclusion of my inquiry will I submit, should it approve itself to me as the truth. I hasten to the fulfilment of my task.

I seize on Nature in her rapid and unresting flight, detain her for an instant, hold the present moment steadily in view, and reflect—upon this Nature by means of which my thinking powers have hitherto been developed and trained to those researches that belong to her domain.

I am surrounded by objects which I am compelled to regard as separate, independent, self-subsisting wholes. I behold plants, trees, animals. I ascribe to each individual certain properties and attributes by which I distinguish it from others; to this plant, such a form; to another, another; to this tree, leaves of such a shape; to another, others differing from them. Every object has its appointed number of attributes, neither more nor less. To every question, whether it is this or that, there is, for any one who is thoroughly acquainted with it, a decisive Yes possible, or a decisive No, so that there is an end of all doubt or hesitation on the subject. Everything that exists *is* something, or it *is not* this something;—is coloured, or is not coloured;—has a certain colour, or has it not;—may be tasted, or may not;—is tangible, or is not;—and so on, *ad infinitum.*

Every object possesses each of these attributes in a definite degree. Let a measure be given for any particular attribute which is capable of being applied to the object; then we may discover the exact extent of that attribute, which it neither exceeds nor falls short of. I measure the height of this tree; it is defined, and it is not a single line higher or lower

than it is. I consider the green of its leaves; it is a definite green, not the smallest shade darker or lighter, fresher or more faded than it is; although I may have neither measure nor expression for these qualities. I turn my eye to this plant; it is at a definite stage of growth between its budding and its maturity, not in the smallest degree nearer or more remote from either than it is. *Everything that exists is determined throughout; it is what it is, and nothing else.*

Not that I am unable to conceive of an object as floating unattached between opposite determinations. I do certainly conceive of indefinite objects; for more than half of my thoughts consist of such conceptions. I think of a tree *in general.* Has this tree fruit or not, leaves or not; if it has, what is their number?—to what order of trees does it belong?—how large is it?—and so on. All these questions remain unanswered, and my thought is undetermined in these respects; for I did not propose to myself the thought of any particular tree, but of a tree generally. But I deny actual existence to such a tree in thus leaving it undefined. Everything that actually exists has its determinate number of all the possible attributes of actual existence, and each of these in a determinate measure, as surely as it actually exists, although I may admit my inability thoroughly to exhaust all the properties of any one object, or to apply to them any standard of measurement.

But Nature pursues her course of ceaseless change, and while I yet speak of the moment which I sought to detain before me, it is gone, and all is changed;

and in like manner, before I had fixed my observation upon it, all was otherwise. It had not always been as it was when I observed it;—it had *become* so.

Why then, and from what cause, had it become so? Why had Nature, amid the infinite variety of possible forms, assumed in this moment precisely these and no others?

For this reason, that they were preceded by those precisely which did precede them, and by no others, and because the present could arise out of those and out of no other possible conditions. Had anything in the preceding moment been in the smallest degree different from what it was, then in the present moment something would have been different from what it is. And from what cause were all things in that preceding moment precisely such as they were? For this reason, that in the moment preceding that, they were such as they were then. And this moment again was dependent on its predecessor, and that on another, and so on without limit. In like manner will Nature, in the succeeding moment, be necessarily determined to the particular forms which it will then assume—for this reason, that in the present moment it is determined exactly as it is; and were anything in the present moment in the smallest degree different from what it is, then in the succeeding moment something would necessarily be different from what it will be. And in the moment following that, all things will be precisely as they will be, because in the immediately previous moment they will be as they will be; and so will its successor proceed forth from it, and another from that, and so on forever.

Nature proceeds throughout the whole infinite series

of her possible determinations without outward incentive; and the succession of these changes is not arbitrary, but follows strict and unalterable laws. Whatever exists in Nature, necessarily exists as it does exist, and it is absolutely impossible that it should be otherwise. I enter within an unbroken chain of phenomena, in which every link is determined by that which has preceded it, and in its turn determines the next; so that, were I able to trace backward the causes through which alone any given moment could have come into actual existence, and to follow out the consequences which must necessarily flow from it, I should then be able, at that moment, and by means of thought alone, to discover all possible conditions of the universe, both past and future; —past, by interpreting the given moment; future, by foreseeing its results. Every part contains the whole, for *only* through the whole is each part what it is, but through the whole it is *necessarily* what it is.

What is it then which I have thus arrived at? If I review my positions as a whole, I find their substance to be this:—that in every stage of progress an antecedent is necessarily supposed, from which and through which alone the present has arisen; in every condition a previous condition, in every existence, another existence; and that from nothing, nothing whatever can proceed.

Let me pause here a little, and develop whatever is contained in this principle, until it becomes perfectly clear to me! For it may be that on my clear insight into this point may depend the success of my whole future inquiry.

Why, and from what cause, I had asked, are the determinate forms of objects precisely such as they are at this moment. I assumed without farther proof, and without the slightest inquiry, as an absolute, immediate, certain and unalterable truth, that they had a cause;—that not through themselves, but through something which lay beyond them, they had attained existence and reality. I found their existence insufficient to account for itself, and I was compelled to assume another existence beyond them, as a necessary condition of theirs. But why did I find the existence of these qualities and determinate forms insufficient for itself? why did I find it to be an incomplete existence? What was there in it which betrayed to me its insufficiency? This, without doubt:—that, in the first place, these qualities do not exist in and for themselves,—they are qualities of something else, attributes of a substance, forms of something formed; and the supposition of such a substance, of a something to support these attributes,—of a *substratum* for them, to use the phraseology of the Schools,—is a necessary condition of the conceivableness of such qualities. Further, before I can attribute a definite quality to such a *substratum,* I must suppose for it a condition of repose, and of cessation from change,—a pause in its existence. Were I to regard it as in a state of transition, then there could be no definite determination, but merely an endless series of charges from one state to another. The state of determination in a thing is thus a state and expression of mere passivity; and a state of mere passivity is in itself an incomplete existence. Such passivity itself demands an activity to which it may be referred, by which it can be explained, and through

which it first becomes conceivable;—or, as it is usually expressed,—*which contains within it the ground of this passivity.*

What I found myself compelled to suppose was thus by no means that the various and successive determinations of Nature themselves produce each other,—that the present determination annihilates itself, and, in the next moment, when it no longer exists, produces another, which is different from itself, and not contained in it, to fill its place:—this is wholly inconceivable. The mere determination produces neither itself nor anything else.

What I found myself compelled to assume in order to account for the gradual origin and the changes of those determinations, was an *active power*, peculiar to the object, and constituting its essential nature.

And how, then, do I conceive of this power?—what is its nature, and the modes of its manifestation? This only,—that under these definite conditions it produces, by its own energy and for its own sake, this definite effect and no other;—and that it produces this certainly and infallibly.

This principle of activity, of independent and spontaneous development, dwells in itself alone, and in nothing beyond itself, as surely as it is power—power which is not impelled or set in motion, but which sets itself in motion. The cause of its having developed itself precisely in this manner and no other, lies partly in itself—because it is this particular power and no other; and partly in the circumstances under which it developes itself. Both these,—the inward determination of a power by itself, and its outward determination by circumstances,—must be united in order to produce a change. The latter, the circum-

stances, the passive condition of things,—can of itself produce no change, for it has within it the opposite of all change,—inert existence. The former, the power,—is wholly determined, for only on this condition is conceivable; but its determination is completed only through the circumstances under which it is developed. I can conceive of a power, it can have an existence for me, only in so far as I can perceive an effect proceeding from it; an inactive power,—which should yet be a *power,* and not an inert *thing,* —is wholly inconceivable. Every effect, however, is determined; and—since the effect is but the expression, but another mode of the activity itself,—the active power is determined in its activity; and the ground of this determination lies partly in itself, because it cannot otherwise be conceived of as a particular and definite power;—partly out of itself, because its own determination can be conceived of only as conditioned by something else.

A flower has sprung out of the earth, and I infer from thence a formative power in Nature. Such a formative power exists for me only so far as this flower and others, plants generally, and animals exist for me:—I can describe this power only through its effects, and it is to me no more than the producing cause of such effects,—the generative principle of flowers, plants, animals, and organic forms in general. I will go further, and maintain that a flower, and this particular flower, could arise in this place only in so far as all other circumstances united to make it possible. But by the union of all these circumstances for its possibility, the actual existence of the flower is by no means explained; and for this I am still compelled to assume a special, spontaneous, and original

power in Nature, and indeed a *flower-producing* power; for another power of Nature might, under the same circumstances, have produced something entirely different.—I have thus attained to the following view of the Universe.

When I contemplate all things as one whole, one Nature, there is but one power,—when I regard them as separate existences, there are many powers—which develop themselves according to their inward laws, and pass through all the possible forms of which they are capable; and all objects in Nature are but those powers under certain determinate forms. The manifestations of each individual power of Nature are determined, become what they are, partly by its own essential character, and partly through the manifestations of all the other powers of Nature with which it is connected; but it is connected with them all—for Nature is one connected whole. They are, therefore, unalterably determined;—while its essential character remains what it is, and while it continues to manifest itself under these particular circumstances, its manifestations must necessarily be what they are;—and it is absolutely impossible that they should be in the smallest degree different from what they are.

In every moment of her duration Nature is one connected whole; in every moment each individual part must be what it is, because all the others are what they are; and you could not remove a single grain of sand from its place, without thereby, although perhaps imperceptibly to you, changing something throughout all parts of the immeasurable whole. But every moment of this duration is determined by all past moments, and will determine all future moments; and you cannot conceive even the position of a grain

of sand other than it is in the Present, without being compelled to conceive the whole indefinite Past to have been other than what it has been, and the whole indefinite Future other than what it will be. Make the experiment, for instance, with this grain of quick-sand. Suppose it to lie some few paces further inland than it does:—then must the storm-wind that drove it in from the sea have been stronger than it actually was;—then must the preceding state of the weather, by which this wind was occasioned and its degree of strength determined, have been different from what it actually was; and the previous state by which this particular weather was determined,—and so on; and thus you have, without stay or limit, a wholly different temperature of the air from that which really existed, and a different constitution of the bodies which possess an influence over this temperature, and over which, on the other hand, it exercises such an influence. On the fruitfulness or unfruitfulness of countries, and through that, or even directly, on the duration of human life,—this temperature exercises a most decided influence. How can you know,—since it is not permitted us to penetrate the arcana of Nature, and it is therefore allowable to speak of possibilities,—how can you know, that in such a state of weather as may have been necessary to carry this grain of sand a few paces further inland, some one of your forefathers might not have perished from hunger, or cold, or heat, before begetting that son from whom you are descended; and that thus you might never have been at all, and all that you have ever done, and all that you ever hope to do in this world, must have been obstructed in order that a grain of sand might lie in a different place?

I myself, with all that I call mine, am a link in this chain of the rigid necessity of Nature. There was a time—so others tell me who were then alive, and I am compelled by reasoning to admit such a time of which I have no immediate consciousness,—there was a time in which I was not, and a moment in which I began to be. I then only existed for others,—not yet for myself. Since then, my self, my self-consciousness, has gradually unfolded itself, and I have discovered in myself certain capacities and faculties, wants and natural desires. I am a definite creature, which came into being at a certain time.

I have not come into being by my own power. It would be the highest absurdity to suppose that I was before I came into existence, in order to bring myself into existence. I have, then, been called into being by another power beyond myself. And by what power but the universal power of Nature, since I too am a part of Nature? The time at which my existence began, and the attributes with which I came into being, were determined by this universal power of Nature; and all the forms under which these inborn attributes have since manifested themselves, and will manifest themselves as long as I have a being, are determined by the same power. It was impossible that, instead of me, another should have come into existence;—it is impossible that this being, once here, should at any moment of its existence be other than what it is and will be.

That my successive states of being have been accompanied by consciousness, and that some of them, such as thoughts, resolutions, and the like, appear to be nothing but varied modes of consciousness, need not perplex my reasonings. It is the natural consti-

tution of the plant to develop itself, of the animal to move, of man to think,—all after fixed laws. Why should I hesitate to acknowledge the last as the manifestation of an original power of Nature, as well as the first and second? Nothing could hinder me from doing so but mere wonder; thought being assuredly a far higher and more subtle operation of Nature than the formation of a plant or the proper motion of an animal. But how can I accord to such a feeling any influence whatever upon the calm conclusions of reason? I cannot indeed explain how the power of Nature can produce thought; but can I better explain its operation in the formation of a plant or in the motion of an animal? To attempt to deduce thought from any mere combination of matter is a perversity into which I shall not fall; but can I then explain from it even the formation of the simplest moss? Those original powers of Nature cannot be explained, for it is only by them that we can explain everything which is susceptible of explanation. Thought exists,—its existence is absolute and independent just as the formative power of Nature exists absolutely and independently. It is in Nature; for the thinking being arises and develops himself according to the laws of Nature; therefore thought exists through Nature. There is in Nature an original thinking-power, as there is an original formative-power.

This original thinking-power of the Universe goes forth and develops itself in all possible modes of which it is capable, as the other original forces of Nature go forth and assume all forms possible to them. I, like the plant, am a particular mode or manifestation of the formative-power; like the animal, a particular mode or manifestation of the power of motion; and besides

these I am also a particular mode or manifestation of the thinking-power; and the union of these three original powers into one,—into one harmonious development,—is the distinguishing characteristic of my species, as it is the distinguishing characteristic of the plant species to be merely a mode or manifestation of the formative-power.

Figure, motion, thought, in me, are not dependent on each other and consequent on each other;—so that I think and thereby conceive of the forms and motions that surround me in such or such a manner because they are so, or on the other hand, that they are so because I so conceive of them,—but they are all simultaneous and harmonious developments of one and the same power, the manifestation of which necessarily assumes the form of a complete creature of my species, and which may thus be called the *man-forming* power. A thought arises within me absolutely, without dependence on anything else; the corresponding form likewise arises absolutely, and also the motion which corresponds to both. I am not what I am, because I think so, or will so; nor do I think and will it, because I am so; but I am, and I think, both absolutely;—both harmonize with each other by virtue of a higher power.

As surely as those original powers of Nature exist for themselves, and have their own internal laws and purposes, so surely must their outward manifestations, if they are left to themselves and not suppressed by any foreign force, endure for a certain period of time, and describe a certain circle of change. That which disappears even at the moment of its production is assuredly not the manifestation of one primordial power, but only a consequence of the combined opera-

tion of various powers. The plant, a particular mode or manifestation of the formative-power of Nature, when left to itself, proceeds from the first germination to the ripening of the seed. Man, a particular mode or manifestation of all the powers of Nature in their union, when left to himself, proceeds from birth to death in old age. Hence, the duration of the life of plants and of men, and the varied modes of this life.

This form, this proper motion, this thought, in harmony with each other,—this duration of all these essential qualities, amidst many non-essential changes, belong to me in so far as I am a being of my species. But the *man-forming* power of Nature had already displayed itself before I existed, under a multitude of outward conditions and circumstances. Such outward circumstances have determined the particular manner of its present activity, which has resulted in the production of precisely such an individual of my species as I am. The same circumstances can never return, unless the whole course of Nature should repeat itself, and two Natures arise instead of one; hence the same individuals, who have once existed, can never again come into actual being. Further, the *man-forming* power of Nature manifests itself, during the same time in which I exist, under all conditions and circumstances possible in that time. But no combination of such circumstances can perfectly resemble those through which I came into existence, unless the universe could divide itself into two perfectly similar but independent worlds. It is impossible that two perfectly similar individuals can come into actual existence at the same time. It is thus determined what I, this definite person, must be; and the general law by which I am what

I am is discovered. I am that which the *man-forming* power of Nature—having been what it was, being what it is, and standing in this particular relation to the other opposing powers of Nature—*could become;* and —there being no ground of limitation within itself,— since it *could* become, necessarily *must become.* I am that which I am, because in this particular position of the great system of Nature, only such a person, and absolutely no other, was possible;—and a spirit who could look through the innermost secrets of Nature, would, from knowing one single man, be able distinctly to declare what men had formerly existed, and what men would exist at any future moment;—in one individual he would discern all actual and possible individuals. It is this, my inter-connexion with the whole system of Nature, which determines what I have been, what I am, and what I shall be; and the same spirit would be able, from any possible moment of my existence, to discover infallibly what I had previously been, and what I was afterwards to become. All that, at any time, I am and shall be, I am and shall be of absolute necessity; and it is impossible that I should be anything else.

I am, indeed, conscious of myself as an independent, and, in many occurrences of my life, a free being; but this consciousness may easily be explained on the principles already laid down, and may be thoroughly reconciled with the conclusions which have been drawn. My immediate consciousness, my proper perception, cannot go beyond myself and the modes of my own being;—I have immediate knowledge of myself alone: whatever I may know more than this, I

know only by inference, in the same way in which I have inferred the existence of original powers of Nature, which yet do not lie within the circle of my perceptions. I myself however,—that which I call *me* —my personality,—am not the *man-forming* power of Nature, but only one of its manifestations; and it is only of this manifestation that I am conscious, as myself, not of that power whose existence I only infer from the necessity of explaining my own. This manifestation, however, in its true nature, is really the product of an original and independent power, and must appear as such in consciousness. On this account I recognise myself generally as an independent being. For this reason I appear to myself *as free* in certain occurrences of my life, when these occurrences are the manifestations of the independent power which falls to my share as an individual; *as restrained and limited,* when, by any combination of outward circumstances, which may arise in time, but do not lie within the original limitations of my personality, I cannot do what my individual power would naturally, if unobstructed, be capable of doing; *as compelled,* when this individual power, by the superiority of antagonistic powers, is constrained to manifest itself even in opposition to the laws of its own nature.

Bestow consciousness on a tree, and let it grow, spread out its branches, and bring forth leaves and buds, blossoms and fruits, after its kind, without hindrance or obstruction:—it will perceive no limitation to its existence in being only a tree, a tree of this particular species, and this particular individual of the species; it will feel itself perfectly *free,* because, in all those manifestations, it will do nothing but what its

nature requires; and it will desire to do nothing else, because it can only desire what that nature requires. But let its growth be hindered by unfavourable weather, want of nourishment, or other causes, and it will feel itself *limited and restrained,* because an impulse which actually belongs to its nature is not satisfied. Bind its free waving boughs to a wall, force foreign branches on it by ingrafting, and it will feel itself *compelled* to one course of action; its branches will grow, but not in the direction they would have taken if left to themselves; it will produce fruits, but not those which belong to its original nature. In immediate consciousness, I appear to myself as free; by reflection on the whole of Nature, I discover that freedom is absolutely impossible; the former must be subordinate to the latter, for it can be explained only by means of it.

What high satisfaction is attained through the system which my understanding has thus built up! What order, what firm connexion, what comprehensive supervision does it introduce into the whole fabric of my knowledge! Consciousness is here no longer that stranger in Nature, whose connexion with existence is so incomprehensible; it is native to it, and indeed one of its necessary manifestations. Nature rises gradually in the fixed series of her productions. In rude matter she is a simple existence; in organized matter she returns within herself to internal activity; in the plant, to produce form; in the animal, motion;—in man, as her highest masterpiece, she turns inward that she may perceive and contemplate herself,—in him she, as it were, doubles herself, and, from being mere existence, becomes existence and consciousness in one.

How I am and must be conscious of my own being and of its determinations, is, in this, connexion, easily understood. My being and my knowledge have one common foundation,—my own nature. The being within me, even because it is my being, is conscious of itself. Quite as conceivable is my consciousness of corporeal objects existing beyond myself. The powers in whose manifestation my personality consists,—the formative—the self-moving—the thinking powers—are not these same powers as they exist in Nature at large, but only a certain definite portion of them; and that they are but such a portion, is because there are so many other existences beyond me. From the former, I can infer the latter; from the limitation, that which limits. Because I myself am not this or that, which yet belongs to the connected system of existence, it must exist beyond me;—thus reasons the thinking principle within me. Of my own limitation, I am immediately conscious, because it is a part of myself, and only by reason of it do I possess an actual existence; my consciousness of the source of this limitation,—of that which I myself am not,—is produced by the former, and arises out of it.

Away, then, with those pretended influences and operations of outward things upon me, by means of which they are supposed to pour in upon me a knowledge which is not in themselves and cannot flow forth from them. The ground upon which I assume the existence of something beyond myself, does not lie out of myself, but within me, in the limitation of my own personality. By means of this limitation, the thinking principle of Nature within me proceeds out of itself, and is able to survey itself as a whole, although, in each individual, from a different point of view.

In the same way there arises within me the idea of other thinking beings like myself. I, or the thinking power of Nature within me, possess some thoughts which seem to have developed themselves within myself as a particular form of Nature; and others, which seem not to have so developed themselves. And so it is in reality. The former are my own peculiar, individual contributions to the general circle of thought in Nature; the latter are deduced from them, as what must surely have a place in that circle; but being only inferences so far as I am concerned, must find that place, not in me, but in other thinking beings:—hence I conclude that there are other thinking beings besides myself. In short, Nature, becomes in me conscious of herself as a whole, but only by beginning with my own individual consciousness, and proceeding from thence to the consciousness of universal being by inference founded on the principle of causality;—that is, she is conscious of the conditions under which alone such a form, such a motion, such a thought as that in which my personality consists, is possible. The principle of causality is the point of transition, from the particular within myself, to the universal which lies beyond myself; and the distinguishing characteristic of those two kinds of knowledge is this, that the one is immediate perception, while the other is inference.

In each individual, Nature beholds herself from a particular point of view. I call myself—*I*, and thee —*thou*; thou callest thyself—*I*, and me—*thou;* I lie beyond thee, as thou beyond me. Of what is without me, I comprehend first those things which touch me most nearly; thou, those which touch thee most nearly; —from these points we each proceed onwards to the

next proximate; but we describe very different paths, which may here and there intersect each other, but never run parallel. There is an infinite variety of possible individuals, and hence also an infinite variety of possible starting points of consciousness. This consciousness of all individuals taken together, constitutes the complete consciousness of the universe; and there is no other, for only in the individual is there definite completeness and reality.

The testimony of consciousness in each individual is altogether sure and trustworthy, if it be indeed the consciousness here described; for this consciousness develops itself out of the whole prescribed course of Nature, and Nature cannot contradict herself. Wherever there is a conception, there must be a corresponding existence, for conceptions are only produced simultaneously with the production of the corresponding realities. To each individual his own particular consciousness is wholly determined, for it proceeds from his own nature:—no one can have other conceptions, or a greater or less degree of vitality in these conceptions, than he actually has. The substance of his conceptions is determined by the position which he assumes in the universe; their clearness and vitality, by the higher or lower degree of efficiency manifested by the power of humanity in his person. Give to Nature the determination of one single element of a person, let it seem to be ever so trivial,—the course of a muscle, the turn of a hair,—and, had she a universal consciousness and were able to reply to thee, she could tell thee all the thoughts which could belong to this person during the whole period of his conscious existence.

In this system also, the phenomenon of our con-

sciousness which we call Will, becomes thoroughly intelligible. A volition is the immediate consciousness of the activity of any of the powers of Nature within us. The immediate consciousness of an effort of these powers which has not yet become a reality because it is hemmed in by opposing powers, is, in consciousness, inclination or desire;—the struggle of contending powers is irresolution;—the victory of one is the determination of the Will. If the power which strives after activity be only that which we have in common with the plant or the animal, there arises a division and degradation of our inward being; the desire is unworthy of our rank in the order of things, and, according to a common use of language, may be called a low one. If this striving power be the whole undivided force of humanity, then is the desire worthy of our nature, and it may be called a high one. The latter effort, considered absolutely, may be called a moral law. The activity of this latter is a virtuous Will, and the course of action resulting from it is virtue. The triumph of the former not in harmony with the latter is vice; such a triumph *over* the latter, and despite its opposition, is crime.

The power, which, on each individual occasion, proves triumphant, triumphs of necessity; its superiority is determined by the whole connexion of the universe; and hence by the whole connexion is the vice or crime of each individual irrevocably determined. Give to Nature, once more, the course of a muscle, the turn of a hair, in any particular individual, and, had she the power of universal thought and could answer thee, she would be able to declare all the good and evil deeds of his life from the beginning to the end of it. But still virtue does not cease to be virtue, nor

vice to be vice. The virtuous man is a noble product of nature; the vicious, an ignoble and contemptible one:—although both are necessary results of the connected system of the universe.

Repentance is the consciousness of the continued effort of humanity within me, even after it has been overcome, associated with the disagreeable sense of having been subdued; a disquieting but still precious pledge of our nobler nature. From this consciousness of the fundamental impulse of our nature, arises the sense which has been called 'conscience,' and its greater or less degree of strictness and susceptibility, down to the absolute want of it in many individuals. The ignoble man is incapable of repentance, for in him humanity has at no time sufficient strength to contend with the lower impulses. Reward and punishment are the natural consequences of virtue and vice for the production of new virtue and new vice. By frequent and important victories, our peculiar power is extended and strengthened; by inaction or frequent defeat, it becomes ever weaker and weaker. The ideas of guilt and accountability have no meaning but in external legislation. He only has incurred guilt, and must render an account of his crime, who compels society to employ artificial external force in order to restrain in him the activity of those impulses which are injurious to the general welfare.

My inquiry is closed, and my desire of knowledge satisfied. I know what I am, and wherein the nature of my species consists. I am a manifestation, determined by the whole system of the universe, of a power of Nature which is determined by itself. To understand thoroughly my particular personal being in its

deepest sources is impossible, for I cannot penetrate into the innermost recesses of Nature. But I am immediately conscious of this my personal existence. I know right well what I am at the present moment; I can for the most part remember what I have been formerly; and I shall learn what I shall be, when what is now future shall become present experience.

I cannot indeed make use of this discovery in the regulation of my actions, for I do not truly act at all, but Nature acts in me; and to make myself anything else than that for which Nature has intended me, is what I cannot even propose to myself, for I am not the author of my own being, but Nature has made me myself, and all that I am. I may repent, and rejoice, and form good resolutions;—although, strictly speaking, I cannot even do this, for all these things come to me of themselves, when it is appointed for them to come;—but most certainly I cannot, by all my repentance, and by all my resolutions, produce the smallest change in that which I must once for all inevitably become. I stand under the inexorable power of rigid Necessity:—should she have destined me to become a fool and a profligate, a fool and a profligate without doubt I shall become; should she have destined me to be wise and good, wise and good I shall doubtless be. There is neither blame nor merit to her nor to me. She stands under her own laws, I under hers. I see this, and feel that my tranquillity would be best ensured by subjecting my wishes also to that Necessity to which my being is wholly subject.

But, oh these opposing wishes! For why should I any longer hide from myself the sadness, the horror,

the amazement with which I was penetrated when I saw how my inquiry must end? I had solemnly promised myself that my inclinations should have no influence in the direction of my thoughts; and I have not knowingly allowed them any such influence. But may I not at last confess that this result contradicts the profoundest aspirations, wishes, and wants of my being. And, despite of the accuracy and the decisive strictness of the proofs by which it seems to be supported, how can I truly believe in a theory of my being which strikes at the very root of that being, which so distinctly contradicts all the purposes for which alone I live, and without which I should loathe my existence?

Why must my heart mourn at, and be lacerated by, that which so perfectly satisfies my understanding? While nothing in Nature contradicts itself, is man alone a contradiction? Or perhaps not man in general, but only me and those who resemble me? Had I but been contented to remain amid the pleasant delusions that surrounded me, satisfied with the immediate consciousness of my existence, and never raised those questions concerning its foundation, the answer to which has caused me this misery! But if this answer be true, then *I must* of necessity have raised these questions: I indeed raised them not,—the thinking nature within me raised them. I was destined to this misery, and I weep in vain the lost innocence of soul which can never return to me again.

But courage! Let all else be lost, so that this at least remains! Merely for the sake of my wishes, did they lie ever so deep or seem ever so sacred, I cannot

renounce what rests on incontrovertible evidence. But perhaps I may have erred in my investigation;—perhaps I may have only partially comprehended and imperfectly considered the grounds upon which I had to proceed. I ought to retrace the inquiry again from the opposite end, in order that I may at least possess a correct starting point. What is it, then, that I find so repugnant, so painful, in the decision to which I have come? What is it, which I desired to find in its place? Let me before all things make clear to myself what are these inclinations to which I appeal.

That I should be destined to be wise and good, or foolish and profligate, without power to change this destiny in aught,—in the former case having no merit, and in the latter incurring no guilt,—this it was that filled me with amazement and horror. The reference of my being, and of all the determinations of my being, to a cause lying *out of myself,*—the manifestations of which were again determined by other causes *out of itself,*—this it was from which I so violently recoiled. That freedom which was not my own, but that of a foreign power without me, and even in that, only a limited half-freedom,—this it was which did not satisfy me. I myself,—that of which I am conscious as my own being and person, but which in this system appears as only the manifestation of a higher existence,—this "I" would be independent,—would be something, not by another or through another, but of myself,—and, as such, would be the final root of all my own determinations. The rank which in this system is assumed by an original power of Nature I would myself assume; with this difference, that the modes of my manifestations shall not be determined by any foreign power. I desire to possess an inward and pe-

culiar power of manifestation, infinitely manifold like those powers of Nature; and this power shall manifest itself in the particular way in which it does manifest itself, for no other reason than because it does so manifest itself; not, like these powers of Nature, because it is placed under such or such outward conditions.

What then, according to my wish, shall be the especial seat and centre of this peculiar inward power? Evidently not my body, for that I willingly allow to pass for a manifestation of the powers of Nature,—at least so far as its constitution is concerned, if not with regard to its farther determinations; not my sensuous inclinations, for these I regard as a relation of those powers to my consciousness. Hence it must be my thought and will. I would exercise my voluntary power freely, for the accomplishment of aims which I shall have freely adopted; and this will, as its ultimate ground which can be determined by no higher, shall move and mould, first my own body, and through it the surrounding world. My active powers shall be under the control of my will alone, and shall be set in motion by nothing else than by it. Thus it shall be. There shall be a Supreme Good in the spiritual world; I shall have the power to seek this with freedom until I find it, to acknowledge it as such when found, and it shall be my fault if I do not find it. This Supreme Good I shall will to know, merely because I will it; and if I will anything else instead of it, the fault shall be mine. My actions shall be the result of this will, and without it there shall absolutely no action of mine ensue, since there shall be no other power over my actions but this will. Then shall my powers, determined by, and subject to the dominion of, my will,

invade the external world. I will be the lord of Nature, and she shall be my servant. I will influence her according to the measure of my capacity, but she shall have no influence on me.

This, then, is the substance of my wishes and aspirations. But the system, which has satisfied my understanding, has wholly repudiated these. According to the one, I am wholly independent of Nature and of any law which I do not impose upon myself; according to the other, I am but a strictly determined link in the chain of Nature. Whether such a freedom as I have desired be at all conceivable, and, if so, whether there be not grounds which, on complete and thorough investigation, may compel me to accept it as a reality and to ascribe it to myself, and whereby the result of my former conclusions might thus be refuted;—this is now the question.

To be free, in the sense stated, means that I myself will make myself whatever I am to be. I must then,—and this is what is most surprising, and, at first sight, absurd in the idea,—I must already be, in a certain sense, that which I shall become, in order to be able to become so; I must possess a two-fold being, of which the first shall contain the *fundamental* determining principle of the second. If I interrogate my immediate self-consciousness on this matter, I find the following. I have the knowledge of various possible courses of action, from amongst which, as it appears to me, I may choose which I please. I run through the whole circle, enlarge it, examine the various courses, compare one with another and consider. I at length decide upon one, determine my will in accord-

ance with it, and this resolution of my will is followed by a corresponding action. Here then, certainly, I am beforehand, in the mere conception of a purpose, what subsequently, by means of this conception I am in will and in action. I am beforehand as a thinking what I am afterwards as an active, being. I create myself:—my being by my thought, my thought by thought itself. One can conceive the determinate state of a manifestation of a mere power of Nature, of a plant for instance, as preceded by an indeterminate state, in which, if left to itself, it might have assumed any one of an infinite variety of possible determinations. These manifold possibilities are certainly possibilities *within it,* contained in its original constitution, but they are not possibilities *for it,* because it is incapable of such an idea, and cannot choose or of itself put an end to this state of indecision: there must be external grounds by which it may be determined to some one of those various possibilities to which it is unable to determine itself. This determination can have no previous existence within it, for it is capable of but one mode of determination, that which it has actually assumed. Hence it was, that I formerly felt myself compelled to maintain that the manifestation of every power must receive its final determination from without. Doubtless I then thought only of such powers as are incapable of consciousness, and manifest themselves merely in the outward world. To them that assertion may be applied without the slightest limitation;—but to intelligences the grounds of it are not applicable, and it was, therefore, rash to extend it to them.

Freedom, such as I have laid claim to, is conceivable only of intelligences; but to them, undoubtedly, it be-

longs. Under this supposition, man, as well as nature, is perfectly comprehensible. My body, and my capacity of operating in the world of sense, are, as in the former system, manifestations of certain limited powers of Nature; and my natural inclinations are the relations of these manifestations to my consciousness. The mere knowledge of what exists independently of me arises under this supposition of freedom, precisely as in the former system; and up to this point, both agree. But according to the former,—and here begins the opposition between these systems,—according to the former, my capacity of physical activity remains under the dominion of Nature, and is constantly set in motion by the same power which produced it, and thought has here nothing whatever to do but to look on; according to the latter, this capacity, once brought into existence, falls under the dominion of a power superior to Nature and wholly independent of her laws,—the power of determinate purpose and of will. Thought is no longer the mere faculty of observation;—it is the source of action itself. In the one case, my state of indecision is put an end to by forces, external and invisible to me, which limit my activity as well as my immediate consciousness of it—that is, my will—to one point, just as the indeterminate activity of the plant is limited;—in the other, it is I myself, independent, and free from the influence of all outward forces, who put an end to my state of indecision, and determine my own course, according to the knowledge I have freely attained of what is best.

Which of these two opinions shall I adopt? Am I free and independent?—or am I nothing in myself, and

merely the manifestation of a foreign power? It is clear to me that neither of the two doctrines is sufficiently supported. For the first, there is no other recommendation than its mere conceivableness; for the latter, I extend a principle, which is perfectly true in its own place, beyond its proper and natural application. If intelligence is merely the manifestation of a power of Nature, then I do quite right to extend this principle to it; but, whether it is so or not, is the very question at issue; and this question I must solve by deduction from other premises, not by a one-sided answer assumed at the very commencement of the inquiry, from which I again deduce that only which I myself have previously placed in it. In short, it would seem that neither of the two opinions can be established by argument.

As little can this matter be determined by immediate consciousness. I can never become conscious either of the external powers, by which, in the system of universal necessity, I am determined; nor of my own power, by which, on the system of freedom, I determine myself. Thus whichsoever of the two opinions I may accept, I still accept it, not upon evidence, but merely by arbitrary choice.

The system of freedom satisfies my heart; the opposite system destroys and annihilates it. To stand, cold and unmoved, amid the current of events, a passive mirror of fugitive and passing phenomena,—this existence is insupportable to me; I scorn and detest it. I will love:—I will lose myself in sympathy;—I will know the joy and the grief of life. I myself am the highest object of this sympathy; and the only mode in which I can satisfy its requirements is by my actions. I will do all for the best;—I will rejoice when I have

done right, I will grieve when I have done wrong; and even this sorrow shall be sweet to me, for it is a chord of sympathy,—a pledge of future amendment. In love only there is life;—without it is death and annihilation.

But coldly and insolently does the opposite system advance, and turn this love into a mockery. If I listen to it, I am not, and I cannot act. The object of my most intimate attachment is a phantom of the brain,—a gross and palpable delusion. Not I, but a foreign and to me wholly unknown power, acts in me; and it is a matter of indifference to me how this power unfolds itself. I stand abashed, with my warm affections and my virtuous will, and blush for what I know to be best and purest in my nature, for the sake of which alone I would exist, as for a ridiculous folly. What is holiest in me is given over as a prey to scorn.

Doubtless it was the love of this love, an interest in this interest, that impelled me, unconsciously, before I entered upon the inquiry which has thus perplexed and distracted me, to regard myself, without farther question, as free and independent; doubtless it was this interest which has led me to carry out, even to conviction, an opinion which has nothing in its favour but its intelligibility, and the impossibility of proving its opposite; it was this interest which has hitherto restrained me from seeking any farther explanation of myself and my capacities.

'The opposite system, barren and heartless indeed, but exhaustless in its explanations, will explain even this desire for freedom, and this aversion to the contrary doctrine. It explains everything which I can cite from my own consciousness against it, and as often as I say 'thus and thus is the case,' it replies with

the same cool complacency, "I say so too; and I tell you besides why it must *necessarily* be so." "When thou speakest of thy heart, thy love, thy interest in this and that," thus will it answer all my complaints, "thou standest merely at the point of immediate self-consciousness of thine own being, and this thou hast confessed already in asserting that thou thyself art the object of thy highest interest. Now it is already well known, and we have proved it above, that this *thou* for whom thou art so deeply interested, in so far as it is not the mere activity of thy individual inward nature, is at least an impulse of it;—every such impulse, as surely as it exists, returns on itself and impels itself to activity;—and we can thus understand how this impulse must manifest itself in consciousness, as love for, and interest in, free individual activity. Couldst thou exchange this narrow point of view in self-consciousness for the higher position in which thou mayest grasp the universe, which indeed thou hast promised thyself to take, then it would become clear to thee that what thou hast named thy love is not *thy* love, but a foreign love,—the interest which the original power of Nature manifesting itself in thee takes in maintaining its own peculiar existence. Do not then appeal again to thy love; for even if that could prove anything besides, its supposition here is wholly irregular and unjustifiable. *Thou lovest not* thyself, for, strictly speaking, *thou art not;* it is Nature in thee which concerns herself for her own preservation. Thou hast admitted without dispute, that although in the plant there exists a peculiar impulse to grow and develop itself, the specific activity of this impulse yet depends upon forces lying beyond itself. Bestow consciousness upon the plant,—and it will regard this instinct of growth with

interest and love. Convince it by reasoning that this instinct is unable of itself to accomplish anything whatever, but that the measure of its manifestation is always determined by something out of itself,—and it will speak precisely as thou hast spoken; it will behave in a manner that may be pardoned in a plant, but which by no means beseems thee, who art a higher product of Nature, and capable of comprehending the universe."

What can I answer to this representation? Should I venture to place myself at its point of view, upon this boasted position from whence I may embrace the universe in my comprehension, doubtless I must blush and be silent. This, therefore, is the question,—whether I shall at once assume this position, or confine myself to the range of immediate self-consciousness; whether love shall be made subject to knowledge, or knowledge to love. The latter stands in bad esteem among intelligent people;—the former renders me indescribably miserable, by extinguishing my own personal being within me. I cannot do the latter without appearing inconsiderate and foolish in my own estimation;—I cannot do the former without deliberately annihilating my own existence.

I cannot remain in this state of indecision; on the solution of this question depends my whole peace and dignity. As impossible is it for me to decide; I have absolutely no ground of decision in favour of the one opinion or the other.

Intolerable state of uncertainty and irresolution! Through the best and most courageous resolution of my life, I have been reduced to this! What power can deliver me from it?—what power can deliver me from myself?

BOOK II.

KNOWLEDGE.

CHAGRIN and anguish stung me to the heart. I cursed the returning day which called me back to an existence whose truth and significance were now involved in doubt. I awoke in the night from unquiet dreams. I sought anxiously for a ray of light that might lead me out of these mazes of uncertainty. I sought, but became only more deeply entangled in the labyrinth.

Once at the hour of midnight, a wondrous shape appeared before me, and addressed me:—

"Poor mortal," I heard it say, "thou heapest error upon error, and fanciest thyself wise. Thou tremblest before the phantoms which thou hast thyself toiled to create. Dare to become truly wise. I bring thee no new revelation. What I can teach thee thou already knowest, and thou hast but to recall it to thy remembrance. I cannot deceive thee; for thou, thyself, wilt acknowledge me to be in the right; and shouldst thou still be deceived, thou wilt be deceived by thyself. Take courage;—listen to me, and answer my questions."

I took courage. "He appeals to my own understanding. I will make the venture. He cannot force his own thoughts into my mind; the conclusion to which I shall come must be thought out by myself; the conviction which I shall accept must be of my own creating. Speak, wonderful Spirit!" I exclaimed,

" whatever thou art! Speak, and I will listen. Question me, and I will answer."

The Spirit. Thou believest that these objects here, and those there, are actually present before thee and out of thyself?

I. Certainly I do.

Spirit. And how dost thou know that they are actually present?

I. I see them; I would feel them were I to stretch forth my hand; I can hear the sounds they produce; they reveal themselves to me through all my senses.

Spirit. Indeed! Thou wilt perhaps by and by retract the assertion that thou seest, feelest, and hearest these objects. For the present I will speak as thou dost, as if thou didst really, by means of thy sight, touch, and hearing, perceive the real existence of objects. But observe, it is only *by means of* thy sight, touch, and other external senses. Or is it not so? Dost thou perceive otherwise than through thy senses? and has an object any existence for thee, otherwise than as thou seest it, hearest it, &c. ?

I. By no means.

Spirit. Sensible objects, therefore, exist for thee, only in consequence of a particular determination of thy external senses: thy knowledge of them is but a result of thy knowledge of this determination of thy sight, touch, &c. Thy declaration—'there are objects out of myself; depends upon this other—'I see, hear, feel, and so forth.' ?

I. This is my meaning.

Spirit. And how dost thou know then that thou seest, hearest, feelest?

I. I do not understand thee. Thy questions appear strange to me.

Spirit. I will make them more intelligible. Dost thou see thy sight, and feel thy touch, or hast thou yet a higher sense, through which thou perceivest thy external senses and their determinations?

I. By no means. I know immediately that I see and feel, and what I see and feel; I know this while it is, and simply because it is, without the intervention of any other sense. It was on this account that thy question seemed strange to me, because it appeared to throw doubt on this immediate consciousness.

Spirit. That was not my intention: I desired only to induce thee to make this immediate consciousness clear to thyself. So thou hast an immediate consciousness of thy sight and touch?

I. Yes.

Spirit. Of *thy* sight and touch, I said. Thou art, therefore, the subject seeing, feeling, &c.; and when thou art conscious of the seeing, feeling, &c., thou are conscious of a particular determination or modification of *thyself.*

I. Unquestionably.

Spirit. Thou hast a consciousness of thy seeing, feeling, &c., and thereby thou perceivest the object. Couldst thou not perceive it without this consciousness? Canst thou not recognize an object by sight or hearing, without knowing that thou seest or hearest?

I. By no means.

Spirit. The immediate consciousness of thyself, and of thy own determinations, is therefore the imperative condition of all other consciousness; and thou knowest a thing, only in so far as thou knowest that thou knowest it: no element can enter into the latter cognition which is not contained in the former. Thou

canst not know anything without knowing that thou knowest it?

I. I think so.

Spirit. Therefore thou knowest of the existence of objects only by means of seeing, feeling them, &c.; and thou knowest that thou seest and feelest, only by means of an immediate consciousness of this knowledge. What thou dost not perceive *immediately*, thou dost not perceive at all.

I. I see that it is so.

Spirit. In all perception, thou perceivest in the first place only thyself and thine own condition; whatever is not contained in this perception, is not perceived at all?

I. Thou repeatest what I have already admitted.

Spirit. I would not weary of repeating it in all its applications, if I thought thou hadst not thoroughly comprehended it, and indelibly impressed it on thy mind. Canst thou say, I am conscious of external objects.

I. By no means, if I speak accurately; for the sight and touch by which I grasp these objects are not consciousness itself, but only that of which I am first and most immediately conscious. Strictly speaking, I can only say, that I am conscious of my seeing and touching of these objects.

Spirit. Do not forget, then, what thou hast now clearly understood. ***In all perception thou perceivest only thine own condition.***

I shall, however, continue to speak thy language, since it is most familiar to thee. Thou hast said that thou canst see, hear, and feel objects. How then,—

that is, with what properties or attributes,—dost thou see or feel them?

I. I see that object red, this blue; when I touch them, I find this smooth, that rough—this cold, that warm.

Spirit. Thou knowest then what red, blue, smooth, rough, cold, and warm, really signify.

I. Undoubtedly I do.

Spirit. Wilt thou not describe it to me then?

I. It cannot be described. Look! Turn thine eye towards that object:—what thou becomest conscious of through thy sight, I call red. Touch the surface of this other object:—what thou feelest, I call smooth. In this way I have arrived at this knowledge, and there is no other way by which it can be acquired.

Spirit. But can we not, at least from some of these qualities known by immediate sensation, deduce a knowledge of others differing from them? If, for instance, any one had seen red, green, yellow, but never a blue colour; had tasted sour, sweet, salt, but never bitter,—would he not, by mere reflection and comparison, be able to discover what is meant by blue or bitter, without having ever seen or tasted anything of the kind?

I. Certainly not. What is matter of sensation can only be felt, it is not discoverable by thought; it is no deduction, but a direct and immediate perception.

Spirit. Strange! Thou boastest of a knowledge respecting which thou art unable to tell how thou hast attained it. For see, thou maintainest that thou canst see one quality in an object, feel another, hear a third; thou must, therefore, be able to distinguish sight from touch, and both from hearing?

I. Without doubt.

Spirit. Thou maintainest further, that thou seest this object red, that blue; and feelest this smooth, that rough. Thou must therefore be able to distinguish red from blue, smooth from rough?

I. Without doubt.

Spirit. And thou maintainest that thou hast not discovered this difference by means of reflection and comparison of these sensations in thyself. But perhaps thou hast learnt, by comparing the red or blue colours, the smooth or rough surfaces of *objects out of thyself,* what thou shouldst feel *in thyself* as red or blue, smooth or rough?

I. This is impossible; for my perception of objects proceeds from my perception of my own internal condition, and is determined by it, but not the contrary. I first distinguish objects by distinguishing my own states of being. I can learn that this particular sensation is indicated by the wholly arbitrary sign, red;—and those by the signs, blue, smooth, rough; but I cannot *learn* that the sensations themselves are distinguished, nor how they are distinguished. That they are different, I know only by being conscious of myself, and being conscious of internal change. How they differ, I cannot describe; but I know that they must differ as much as my self-consciousness differs: and this difference of sensations is an immediate, and by no means an acquired, distinction.

Spirit. Which thou canst make independently of all knowledge of the objects themselves?

I. Which I *must* make independently of such knowledge, for this knowledge is itself dependent on that distinction.

Spirit. Which is then given to thee immediately through mere self-consciousness?

I. In no other way.

Spirit. But shouldst thou not then content thyself with saying,—"I feel myself affected in the manner that I call red, blue, smooth, rough."? Shouldst thou not place these sensations in thyself alone? and not transfer them to an object lying entirely out of thyself, and declare these modifications of thyself to be properties of this object?

Or, tell me, when thou believest that thou seest an object red, or feelest it smooth, dost thou really perceive anything more than that thou art affected in a certain manner?

I. From what has gone before, I have clearly seen that I do not, in fact, perceive more than what thou sayest; and this transference of what is in me to something out of myself, from which nevertheless I cannot refrain, now appears very strange to me.

My sensations are in myself, not in the object, for I am myself and not the object; I am conscious only of myself and of my own state, not of the state of the object. If there is a consciousness of the object, that consciousness is, certainly, neither sensation nor perception:—thus much is clear.

Spirit. Thou formest thy conclusions somewhat precipitately. Let us consider this matter on all sides, so that I may be assured that thou wilt not again retract what thou hast now freely admitted

Is there then in the object, as thou usually conceivest of it, anything more than its red colour, its smooth surface, and so on; in short, anything besides those characteristic marks which thou obtainest through immediate sensation?

I. I believe that there is: besides these attributes there is yet the thing itself to which they belong; the substratum which supports these attributes.

Spirit. But through what sense does thou perceive this substratum of these attributes? Dost thou see it, feel it, hear it; or is there perhaps a special sense for its perception?

I. No. I think that I see and feel it.

Spirit. Indeed! Let us examine this more closely. Art thou then ever conscious of thy sight in itself, or at all times only of determinate acts of sight?

I. I have always a determinate sensation of sight.

Spirit. And what is this determinate sensation of sight with respect to that object there?

I. That of red colour.

Spirit. And this red is something positive, a simple sensation, a specific state of thyself?

I. This I have understood.

Spirit. Thou shouldst therefore see the red in itself as simple, as a mathematical point, and thou dost see it only as such. In *thee* at least, as an affection of thyself, it is obviously a simple, determinate state, without connexion with anything else,—which we can only describe as a mathematical point. Or dost thou find it otherwise?

I. I must admit that such is the case.

Spirit. But now thou spreadest this simple red over a broad surface, which thou assuredly *dost not see,* since thou seest only a *simple red.* How dost thou obtain this surface

I. It is certainly strange.—Yet, I believe that I have found the explanation. I do not indeed see the surface, but I *feel* it when I pass my hand over it. My sensation of sight remains the same during this process

of feeling, and hence I extend the red colour over the whole surface which I feel while I continue to see the same red.

Spirit. That might be so, didst thou really feel such a surface. But let us see whether that be possible. Thou dost not feel absolutely thou feelest only thy feelings, and art only conscious of these?

I. Certainly. Each sensation is a determinate something. I never merely see, or hear, or feel, in general, but my sensations are always definite;—red, green, blue colours, cold, warmth, smoothness, roughness, the sound of the violin, the voice of man, and the like,—are seen, felt, or heard. Let that be settled between us.

Spirit. Willingly.—Thus, when thou saidst that thou didst feel a surface, thou hadst only an immediate consciousness of feeling smooth, rough, or the like?

I. Certainly.

Spirit. This smooth or rough is, like the red colour, a simple sensation,—a point in thee, the subject in which it abides? And with the same right with which I formerly asked why thou didst spread a simple sensation of sight over an imaginary surface, do I now ask why thou shouldst do the same with a simple sensation of touch?

I. This smooth surface is perhaps not equally smooth in all points, but possesses in each a different degree of smoothness, only that I want the capacity of strictly distinguishing these degrees from each other, and language whereby to retain and express their differences. Yet I do distinguish them, unconsciously, and place them side by side; and thus I form the conception of a surface.

Spirit. But canst thou, in the same undivided mo-

ment of time, have sensations of opposite kinds, or be affected at the same time in different ways?

I. By no means.

Spirit. Those different degrees of smoothness, which thou wouldst assume in order to explain what thou canst not explain, are nevertheless, in so far as they are different from each other, mere opposite sensations which succeed each other in thee?

I. I cannot deny this.

Spirit. Thou shouldst therefore describe them as thou really findest them,—as successive changes of the same mathematical point, such as thou perceivest in other cases; and not as adjacent and simultaneous qualities of several points in one surface.

I. I see this, and I find that nothing is explained by my assumption. But my hand, with which I touch the object and cover it, is itself a surface; and by it I perceive the object to be a surface, and a greater one than my hand, since I can extend my hand several times upon it.

Spirit. Thy hand is a surface? How dost thou know that? How dost thou attain a consciousness of thy hand at all? Is there any other way than either that thou by means of it feelest something else, in which case it is an instrument; or that thou feelest itself by means of some other part of thy body, in which case it is an object?

I. No, there is no other. With my hand I feel some other definite object, or I feel my hand itself by means of some other part of my body. I have no immediate, absolute consciousness of my hand, any more than of my sight or touch.

Spirit. Let us, at present, consider only the case in which thy hand is an instrument, for this will deter-

mine the second case also. In this case there can be nothing more in the immediate perception than what belongs to sensation,—that whereby thou thyself, and here in particular thy hand, is conceived of as the subject tasting in the act of taste, feeling in the act of touch. Now, either thy sensation is single; in which case I cannot see why thou shouldst extend this single sensation over a sentient surface, and not content thyself with a single sentient point;—or thy sensation is varied; and in this case, since the differences must succeed each other, I again do not see why thou shouldst not conceive of these feelings as succeeding each other in the same point. That thy hand should appear to thee as a surface, is just as inexplicable as thy notion of a surface in general. Do not make use of the first in order to explain the second, until thou hast explained the first itself. The second case, in which thy hand, or whatever other member of thy body thou wilt, is itself the object of a sensation, may easily be explained by means of the first. Thou perceivest this member by means of another, which is then the sentient one. I ask the same question concerning this latter member that I asked concerning thy hand, and thou art as little able to answer it as before.

So it is with the surface of thy eyes, and with every other surface of thy body. It may very well be that the consciousness of an extension out of thyself, proceeds from the consciousness of thine own extension as a material body, and is conditioned by it. But then thou must, in the first place, explain this extension of thy material body.

I. It is enough. I now perceive clearly that I neither see nor feel the superficial extension of the properties of bodies, nor apprehend it by any other

sense. I see that it is my habitual practice to extend over a surface, what nevertheless in sensation is but one point; to represent as adjacent and simultaneous, what I ought to represent as only successive, since in mere sensation there is nothing simultaneous, but all is successive. I discover that I proceed in fact exactly as the geometer does in the construction of his figures, extending points to lines, and lines to surfaces. I am astonished how I should have done this.

Spirit. Thou dost more than this, and what is yet more strange. This surface which thou attributest to bodies, thou canst indeed neither see nor feel, nor perceive by any organ; but it may be said, in a certain sense, that thou canst see the red colour upon it, or feel the smoothness. But thou addest something more even to this surface:—thou extendest it to a solid mathematical figure; as by thy previous admission thou hast extended the line to a surface. Thou assumest a substantial interior existence of the body behind its surface. Tell me, canst thou then see, feel, or recognize by any sense, the actual presence of any thing behind this surface?

I. By no means:—the space behind the surface is impenetrable to my sight, touch, or any of my senses.

Spirit. And yet thou dost assume the existence of such an interior substance, which, nevertheless, thou canst not perceive?

I. I confess it, and my astonishment increases.

Spirit. What then is this something which thou imaginest to be behind the surface?

I. Well—I suppose something similar to the surface,—something tangible.

Spirit. We must ascertain this more distinctly.

Canst thou divide the mass of which thou imaginest the body to consist?

I. I can divide it to infinity;—I do not mean with instruments, but in thought. No possible part is the smallest, so that it cannot again be divided.

Spirit. And in this division dost thou ever arrive at a portion of which thou canst suppose that it is no longer perceptible in itself to sight, touch, &c.;—*in itself* I say, besides being imperceptible to thy own particular organs of sense?

I. By no means.

Spirit. Visible, perceptible, absolutely?—or with certain properties of colour, smoothness, roughness, and the like?

I. In the latter way. Nothing is visible or perceptible absolutely, because there is no absolute sense of sight or touch.

Spirit. Then thou dost but spread through the whole mass thy own sensibility, that which is already familiar to thee,—visibility as coloured, tangibility as rough, smooth, or the like; and after all it is this sensibility itself of which alone thou art sensible? Or dost thou find it otherwise?

I. By no means: what thou sayest follows from what I have already understood and admitted.

Spirit. And yet thou dost perceive nothing behind the surface, and hast perceived nothing there?

I. Were I to break through it, I should perceive something.

Spirit. So much therefore thou knowest beforehand. And this infinite divisibility, in which, as thou maintainest, thou canst never arrive at anything absolutely imperceptible, thou hast never carried it out, nor canst thou do so?

I. I cannot carry it out.

Spirit. To a sensation, therefore, which thou hast really had, thou addest in imagination another which thou hast not had?

I. I am sensible only of that which I attribute to the surface; I am not sensible of what lies behind it, and yet I assume the existence of something there which might be perceived. Yes, I must admit what thou sayest.

Spirit. And the actual sensation is in part found to correspond with what thou hast thus pre-supposed?

I. When I break through the surface of a body, I do indeed find beneath it something perceptible, as I pre-supposed. Yes, I must admit this also.

Spirit. Partly, however, thou hast maintained that there is something beyond sensation, which cannot become apparent to any *actual* perception.

I. I maintain, that were I to divide a corporeal mass to infinity, I could never come to any part which is *in itself* imperceptible; although I admit that I can never make the experiment,— can never practically carry out the division of a corporeal mass to infinity. Yes, I must agree with thee in this also.

Spirit. Thus there is nothing remaining of the object but *what is perceptible,*— what is a property or attribute;— this perceptibility thou extendest through a continuous space which is divisible to infinity; and the true substratum or supporter of the attributes of things which thou hast sought is, therefore, only the space which is thus filled?

I. Although I cannot be satisfied with this, but feel that I must still suppose in the object something more than this perceptibility and the space which it fills, yet I cannot point out this something, and I must there-

fore confess that I have hitherto been unable to discover any substratum but space itself.

Spirit. Always confess whatever thou perceivest to be true. The present obscurities will gradually become clear, and the unknown will be made known. Space itself, however, is not perceived; and thou canst not understand how thou hast obtained this conception, or why thou extendest throughout it this property of perceptibility?

I. It is so.

Spirit. As little dost thou understand how thou hast obtained even this conception of a perceptibility out of thyself, since thou really perceivest only thine own sensation in thyself, not as the property of an external thing, but as an affection of thine own being.

I. So it is. I see clearly that I really perceive only my own state, and not the object; that I neither see, feel, nor hear this object; but that, on the contrary, precisely there where the object should be, all seeing, feeling, and so forth, comes to an end.

But I have a presentiment. Sensations, as *affections of myself,* have no extension whatever, but are simple states; in their differences they are not contiguous to each other in space, but successive to each other in time. Nevertheless, I do extend them in space. May it not be by means of this extension, and simultaneously with it, that what is properly only my own feeling or sensation becomes changed for me into a perceptible something out of myself; and may not this be the precise point at which there arises within me a consciousness of the external object?

Spirit. This conjecture may be confirmed. But could we raise it immediately to a conviction, we should thereby attain to no complete insight, for this higher

question would still remain to be answered,— How dost thou first come to extend sensation through space? Let us then proceed at once to this question; and let us propound it more generally—I have my reasons for doing so—in the following manner:—How is it, that, with thy consciousness, which is but an immediate consciousness of thyself, thou proceedest out of thyself; and to the sensation which thou dost perceive, superaddest an object perceived and perceptible, which yet thou dost not perceive?

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1. Sweet or bitter, fragrant or ill-scented, rough or smooth, cold or warm,— these qualities, when applied to things, signify whatever excites in me this or that taste, smell, or other sensation. It is the same with respect to sounds. A relation to myself is always indicated and it never occurs to me that the sweet or bitter taste, the pleasant or unpleasant smell, lies in the thing itself;—it lies in me, and it only appears to be excited by the object. It seems indeed to be otherwise with the sensations of sight,—with colours, for example, which may not be pure sensations, but a sort of intermediate affections; yet when we consider it strictly, red, and the others, means nothing more than what produces in me a certain sensation of sight. This leads me to understand how it is that I attain to a knowledge of things out of myself. I am affected in a particular manner—this I know absolutely;—this affection must have a foundation; this foundation is not in myself and therefore must be out of myself;— thus I reason rapidly and unconsciously, and forthwith assume the existence of such a foundation,— namely, the object. This foundation must be one by

which the particular affection in question may be explained;—I am affected in the manner which I call a sweet taste, the object must therefore be of a kind to excite a sweet taste, or more briefly, must itself be *sweet*. In this way I determine the character of the object.

Spirit. There may be some truth in what thou sayest, although it is not the whole truth which might be said upon the subject. How this stands we shall undoubtedly discover in due time. Since, however, it cannot be denied that in other cases thou dost discover some truth by means of this principle of causality,—so I term the doctrine which thou hast just asserted, that everything (in this case thy affection) must have a foundation or cause,—since this, I say, cannot be denied, it may not be superfluous to learn strictly to understand this procedure, and to make it perfectly clear to ourselves what it is thou really dost when thou adoptest it. Let us suppose, in the meantime, that thy statement is perfectly correct, that it is by an unconscious act of reasoning, from the effect to the cause, that thou first comest to assume the existence of an outward object;—what then was it which thou wert here conscious of perceiving?

I. That I was affected in a certain manner.

Spirit. But of an object, affecting thee in a certain manner, thou wert not conscious, at least not as a perception?

I. By no means. I have already admitted this.

Spirit. Then, by this principle of causality, thou addest to a knowledge which thou hast, another which thou hast not?

I. Thy words are strange.

Spirit. Perhaps I may succeed in removing this

strangeness. But let my words appear to thee as they may. They ought only to lead thee to produce in thine own mind the same thought that I have produced in mine; not serve thee as a text-book which thou hast only to repeat. When thou hast the thought itself firmly and clearly in thy grasp, then express it as thou wilt, and with as much variety as thou wilt, and be sure that thou wilt always express it well.

How, and by what means, knowest thou of this affection of thyself?

I. It would be difficult to answer thee in words:—Because my consciousness, as a subjective attribute, as the determination of my being in so far as I am an intelligence, proceeds directly upon the existence of this affection as its object, as that of which I am conscious, and is inseparable from it;—because I am possessed of consciousness at all only in so far as I am cognisant of such an affection—cognisant of it absolutely, just as I am cognisant of my own existence.

Spirit. Thou hast therefore an organ,—consciousness itself,—whereby thou perceivest such an affection of thyself?

I. Yes.

Spirit. But an organ whereby thou perceivest the object itself, thou hast not?

I. Since thou hast convinced me that I neither see nor feel the object itself nor apprehend it by any external sense, I find myself compelled to confess that I have no such organ.

Spirit. Bethink thee well of this. It may be turned against thee that thou hast made me this admission. What then is thy external sense at all, and how canst thou call it external, if it have no reference to any ex-

ternal object, and be not the organ whereby thou hast any knowledge of such?

I. I desire truth, and trouble myself little about what may be turned against me. I distinguish absolutely because I do distinguish them, green, sweet, red, smooth, bitter, fragrant, rough, ill-scented, the sound of a violin and of a trumpet. Among these sensations I place some in a certain relation of likeness to each other, although in other respects I distinguish them from each other; thus I find green and red, sweet and bitter, rough and smooth, &c., to have a certain relation of similarity to each other, and this similarity I feel to be respectively one of sight, taste, touch, &c. Sight, taste, and so forth, are not indeed in themselves actual sensations, for I never see or feel absolutely, as thou hast previously remarked, but always see red or green, taste sweet or bitter, &c. Sight, taste, and the like, are only higher definitions of actual sensations; they are classes to which I refer these latter, not by arbitrary arrangement, but guided by the immediate sensation itself. I see in them therefore not external senses, but only particular definitions of the objects of the inward sense, of my own states or affections. How they become external senses, or, more strictly speaking, how I come to regard them as such, and so to name them, is now the question. I do not take back my admission that I have no organ for the object itself.

Spirit. Yet thou speakest of objects as if thou didst really know of their existence, and hadst an organ for such knowledge?

I. Yes.

Spirit. And this thou dost, according to thy previous assumption, in consequence of the knowledge

which thou dost really possess, and for which thou hast an organ, and on account of this knowledge?

I. It is so.

Spirit. Thy real knowledge, that of thy sensations or affections, is to thee like an imperfect knowledge, which, as thou sayest, requires to be completed by another. This other new knowledge thou conceivest and describest to thyself,—not as something which thou hast, for thou hast it not,—but as something which thou shouldst have, over and above thy actual knowledge, if thou hadst an organ wherewith to apprehend it. "I know nothing indeed," thou seemest to say, "of things in themselves, but such things there must be; if I could but find them, they are to be found." Thou supposest another organ, which indeed is not thine, and this thou employest upon them, and thereby apprehendest them,—of course in thought only. Strictly speaking, thou hast no *consciousness of things,* but only *a consciousness* (produced by a procession out of thy actual consciousness by means of the principal of casualty) *of a consciousness of things* (such as ought to be, such as of necessity must be, although not accessible to thee); and now thou wilt perceive that, in the supposition thou hast made, thou hast added to a knowledge which thou hast, another which thou hast not.

I. I must admit this.

Spirit. Henceforward let us call this second knowledge, obtained by means of another, *mediate,* and the first *immediate* knowledge. A certain school has called this procedure which we have to some extent described above, *a synthesis;* by which we are to understand not a *con-nexion* established between two elements previously existing, but an *an-nexion,* and

an addition of a wholly new element, arising through this *an-nexion,* to another element previously existing independently of such addition.

Thus the *first* consciousness appears as soon as thou discoverest thy own existence, and the latter is not discovered without the former; the *second* consciousness is produced in thee by means of the first.

I. But not successive to it in time; for I am conscious of external things at the very same undivided moment in which I become conscious of myself.

Spirit. I did not speak of such a succession in time at all; but I think that when thou reflectest upon that undivided consciousness of thyself and of the external object, distinguishest between them, and inquirest into their connexion, thou wilt find that the latter can be conceived of only as conditioned by the former, and as only possible on the supposition of its existence; but not *vice versa.*

I. So I find it to be; and if that be all thou wouldst say, I admit thy assertion, and have already admitted it.

Spirit. Thou engenderest, I say, this second consciousness; producest it by a real act of thy mind. Or dost thou find it otherwise?

I. I have surely admitted this already. I add to the consciousness which is simultaneous with that of my existence, another which I do not find in myself; I thus complete and double my actual consciousness, and this is certainly an act. But I am tempted to take back either my admission, or else the whole supposition. I am perfectly conscious of the act of my mind when I form a general conception, or when in cases of

doubt I choose one of the many possible modes of action which lie before me; but of the act through which, according to thy assertion, I must produce the presentation of an object out of myself, I am not conscious at all.

Spirit. Do not be deceived. Of an act of thy mind thou canst become conscious only in so far as thou dost pass through a state of indetermination and indecision, of which thou wert likewise conscious, and to which this act puts an end. There is no such state of indecision in the case we have supposed; the mind has no need to deliberate what object it shall superadd to its particular sensations,—it is done at once. We even find this distinction in philosophical phraseology. An act of the mind, of which we are conscious as such, is called *freedom.* An act without consciousness of action, is called *spontaneity.* Remember that I by no means demand of thee an immediate consciousness of the act as such, but only that on subsequent reflection thou shouldst discover that there must have been an act. The higher question, what it is that prevents any such state of indecision, or any consciousness of our act, will undoubtedly be afterwards solved.

This act of the mind is called thought; a word which I have hitherto employed with thy concurrence; and it is said that thought takes place with spontaneity, in opposition to sensation which is mere receptivity. How is it, then, that, in thy previous statement, thou addest in thought to the sensation which thou certainly hast, an object of which thou knowest nothing?

I. I assume that my sensation must have a cause, and then proceed further,—

Spirit. Wilt thou not, in the first place, explain to me what is a cause?

I. I find a thing determined this way or that. I cannot rest satisfied with knowing that *so it is;*—it has *become so,* and that not by itself, but by means of a foreign power. This foreign power, that made it what it is, *contains the cause,* and the manifestation of that power, which did actually make it so, *is the cause* of this particular determination of the thing. That my sensation must have a cause, means that it is produced within me by a foreign power.

Spirit. This foreign power thou now addest in thought to the sensation of which thou art immediately conscious, and thus there arises in thee the presentation of an object? Well,—let it be so.

Now observe; if sensation must have a cause, then I admit the correctness of thy inference; and I see with what perfect right thou assumest the existence of objects out of thyself, notwithstanding that thou neither knowest nor canst know aught of them. But how then dost thou know, and how dost thou propose to prove, that sensation must have a cause? Or, in the general manner in which thou hast stated the proposition, why canst thou not rest satisfied to know that something *is?* why must thou assume that it has *become so,* or that it has become so by means of a foreign power? I note that thou hast always only assumed this.

I. I confess it. But I cannot do otherwise than think so. It seems as if I knew it immediately.

Spirit. What this answer, "thou knowest it immediately," may signify, we shall see should we be brought back to it as the only possible one. We will however first try all other possible methods of ascertaining the grounds of the assertion that everything must have a cause.

Dost thou know this by immediate perception?

I. How could I? since perception only declares that in me something *is,* according as I am determined this way or that, but never that it has *become so;* still less that it has become so by means of a foreign power lying beyond all perception.

Spirit. Or dost thou obtain this principle by generalisation of thy observation of external things, the cause of which thou hast always discovered out of themselves; an observation which thou now appliest to thyself and to thine own condition?

I. Do not treat me like a child, and ascribe to me palpable absurdities. By the principle of causality I first arrive at a knowledge of things out of myself; how then can I again, by observation of these things, arrive at this principle itself. Shall the earth rest on the great elephant, and the great elephant again upon the earth?

Spirit. Or is this principle a deduction from some other general truth?

I. Which again could be founded neither on immediate perception, nor on the observation of external things, and concerning the origin of which thou wouldst still raise other questions! I might only possess this previous fundamental truth by immediate knowledge. Better to say this at once of the principle of causality and let thy conjectures rest.

Spirit. Let it be so;—we then obtain besides the first immediate knowledge of our own states through sensible perception a second immediate knowledge concerning a general truth?

I. So it appears.

Spirit. The particular knowledge now in question, namely, that thy affections or states must have a cause,

is entirely independent of the knowledge of things?

I. Certainly, for the latter is obtained only by means of it.

Spirit. And thou hast it absolutely in thyself?

I. Absolutely, for only by means of it do I first proceed out of myself.

Spirit. Out of thyself therefore, and through thyself, and through thine own immediate knowledge, thou prescribest laws to being and its relations?

I. Rightly considered, I prescribe laws only to my own presentations of being and its relations, and it will be more correct to make use of this expression.

Spirit. Be it so. Art thou then conscious of these laws in any other way than as thou dost act in accordance with them?

I. My consciousness begins with the perception of my own state; I connect directly therewith the presentation of an object according to the principle of causality;—both of these, the consciousness of my own state, and the presentation of an object, are inseparably united, there is no intervening consciousness between them, and this one undivided consciousness is preceded by no other. No, it is impossible that I should be conscious of this law before acting in accordance with it, or in any other way than by so acting.

Spirit. Thou actest upon this law therefore without being conscious of it; thou actest upon it immediately and absolutely. Yet thou didst but now declare thyself conscious of it, and didst express it as a general proposition. How hast thou arrived at this latter consciousness?

I. Doubtless thus. I observe myself subsequently,

and perceive that I have thus acted, and combine this ordinary course of procedure into a general law.

Spirit. Thou canst therefore become conscious of this course of procedure?

I. Unquestionably,—I guess the object of these questions. This is the above-mentioned second kind of immediate consciousness, that of my activity; as the first is sensation, or the consciousness of my passivity.

Spirit. Right. Thou *mayest* subsequently become conscious of thine own acts, by free observation of thyself and by reflection; but it *is not necessary* that thou shouldst become so;—thou dost not become immediately conscious of them at the moment of thy internal act.

I. Yet I must be originally conscious of them, for I am immediately conscious of my presentation of the object at the same moment that I am conscious of the sensation.—I have found the solution; I am immediately conscious of my act only not *as such;* but it moves before me as *an objective reality.* This consciousness is a consciousness of the object. Subsequently by free reflection I may also become conscious of it as an act of my own mind.

My immediate consciousness is composed of two elements:—the consciousness of my passivity, *i. e.,* sensation;—and of my activity, in the creation of an object according to the law of causality;—the latter consciousness connecting itself immediately with the former. My consciousness of the object is only a yet unrecognised *consciousness of my creation of a presentation of an object.* I am cognisant of this creation only because I myself am the creator. And thus all consciousness is immediate, is but a consciousness of my-

self, and therefore perfectly comprehensible. Am I in the right?

Spirit. Perfectly so; but whence then the necessity and universality thou hast ascribed to thy principles;—in this case to the principle of causality?

I. From the immediate feeling that I cannot act otherwise, as surely as I have reason; and that no other reasonable being can act otherwise, as surely as it is a reasonable being. My proposition,—"All that is contingent, such as in this case my sensation, must have a cause,"—means the following: *"I have at all times pre-supposed a cause, and every one who thinks will likewise be constrained to pre-suppose a cause."*

Spirit. Thou perceivest then that all knowledge is merely a knowledge of thyself; that thy consciousness never goes beyond thyself; and that what thou assumest to be a consciousness of the object is nothing but a consciousness of thine own supposition of an object, which, according to an inward law of thy thought, thou dost necessarily make simultaneously with the sensation itself.

I. Proceed boldly with thy inferences;—I have not interrupted thee, I have even helped thee in the development of these conclusions. But now, seriously, I retract my whole previous position, that by means of the principle of causality I arrive at the knowledge of external things; and I did indeed inwardly retract it as soon as it led us into serious error.

In this way I could become conscious only of a mere *power* out of myself, and of this only as a conception of my own mind, just as for the explanation of magentic phenomena, I suppose a magnetic—or for

the explanation of electrical phenomena, an electrical—power in Nature.

But the world does not appear to me such a mere thought,—the thought of a mere power. It is something extended, something which is thoroughly tangible, not like a mere power, through its manifestations, but in itself;—it does not, like this, merely produce, it has qualities;—I am inwardly conscious of my apprehension of it, in a manner quite different from my consciousness of mere thought;—it appears to me as perception, although it has been proved that it cannot be such; and it would be difficult for me to describe this kind of consciousness, and to distinguish it from the other kinds of which we have spoken.

Spirit. Thou must nevertheless attempt such a description, otherwise I shall not understand thee, and we shall never arrive at clearness.

I. I will attempt to open a way towards it. I beseech thee, O Spirit! if thy organ of sight be like mine, to fix thine eye on the red object before us, to surrender thyself unreservedly to the impression produced by it, and to forget meanwhile thy previous conclusions;—and now tell me candidly what takes place in thy mind.

Spirit. I can completely place myself in thy position; and it is no purpose of mine to disown any impression which has an actual existence. But tell me, what is the effect you anticipate?

I. Dost thou not perceive and apprehend at a single glance, the surface?—I say *the surface,*—does it not stand there present before thee, entire and at once?—art thou conscious, even in the most distant and obscure way, of this extension of a simple red point to a line, and of this line to a surface, of which thou

hast spoken? It is an after-thought to divide this surface, and conceive of its points and lines. Wouldst thou not, and would not every one who impartially observes himself, maintain and insist, notwithstanding thy former conclusions, that he really *saw* a surface of such or such a colour?

Spirit. I admit all this; and on examining myself, I find that it is exactly so as thou hast described.

But, in the first place, hast thou forgotten that it is not our object to relate to each other what presents itself in consciousness, as in a journal of the human mind, but to consider its various phenomena in their connexion, and to explain them by, and deduce them from, each other; and that consequently none of thy observations, which certainly cannot be denied, but which must be explained, can overturn any one of my just conclusions.

I. I shall never lose sight of this.

Spirit. Then do not in the remarkable resemblance of this consciousness of bodies out of thyself, which yet thou canst not describe, to real perception, overlook the great difference nevertheless existing between them.

I. I was about to mention this difference. Each indeed appears as an immediate, not as an acquired or produced consciousness. But sensation is consciousness of my own state. Not so the consciousness of the object itself, which has absolutely no reference to me. I know that it *is*, and this is all; it does not concern me. If, in the first case, I seem like a soft strain of music which is modulated now in this way now in that, in the other, I appear like a mirror before which objects pass without producing the slightest change in it.

This distinction however is in my favour. Just so much the more do I seem to have a distinct consciousness of an existence out of myself, entirely independent of the sense of my own state of being;—of an existence out of myself, I say—for this differs altogether in kind from the consciousness of my own internal states.

Spirit. Thou observest well—but do not rush too hastily to a conclusion. If that whereon we have already agreed remains true, and thou canst be immediately conscious of thyself only; if the consciousness now in question be not a consciousness of thine own passivity, and still less a consciousness of thine own activity;—may it not then be an *unrecognised* consciousness of thine own being?—of thy being in so far as thou art a *knowing* being,—an Intelligence?

I. I do not understand thee; but help me once more, for I wish to understand thee.

Spirit. I must then demand thy whole attention, for I am here compelled to go deeper, and expatiate more widely, than ever.——What art thou?

I. To answer thy question in the most general way,—I am I, myself.

Spirit. I am well satisfied with this answer. What dost thou mean when thou sayest "I";—what lies in this conception,—and how dost thou attain it?

I. On this point I can make myself understood only by contrast. External existence—*the thing,* is something out of me, the cognitive being. *I* am *myself* this cognitive being, one with the object of my cognition. As to my consciousness of the former, there arises the question,—Since the thing cannot know itself, how can a knowledge of it arise?—how can a consciousness of the thing arise *in me,* since I myself

am not the thing, nor any of its modes or forms, and all these modes and forms lie within the circle of its own being, and by no means in mine? How does the thing reach me? What is the tie between me, the subject, and the thing which is the object of my knowledge? But as to my consciousness of *myself*, there can be no such question. In this case, I have my knowledge within myself, for I am intelligence. What I am, I know because I am it; and that whereof I know immediately that I am it, that I am because I immediately know it. There is here no need of any tie between subject and object; my own nature is this tie. I am subject and object:—and this *subject-objectivity*, this return of knowledge upon itself, is what I mean by the term "I," when I deliberately attach a definite meaning to it.

Spirit. Thus it is in the identity of subject and object that thy nature as an intelligence consists?

I. Yes.

Spirit. Canst thou then comprehend the possibility of thy becoming conscious of this identity, which is neither subject nor object, but which lies at the foundation of both, and out of which both arise?

I. By no means. It is the condition of all my consciousness, that the conscious being, and what he is conscious of, appear distinct and separate. I cannot even conceive of any other consciousness. In the very act of recognising myself, I recognise myself as subject and object, both however being immediately bound up with each other.

Spirit. Canst thou become conscious of the moment in which this inconceivable one separated itself into these two?

I. How can I, since my consciousness first be-

comes possible in and through their separation,—since it is my consciousness itself that thus separates them? Beyond consciousness itself there is no consciousness.

Spirit. It is this separation, then, that thou necessarily recognisest in becoming conscious of thyself? In this thy very original being consists?

I. So it is.

Spirit. And on what then is it founded?

I. I am intelligence, and have consciousness in myself. This separation is the condition and result of consciousness. It has its foundation, therefore, in myself, like consciousness.

Spirit. Thou art intelligence, thou sayest, at least this is all that is now in question, and as such thou becomest an object to thyself. Thy knowledge, therefore *in its objective capacity,* presents itself before thyself, *i. e.* before thy knowledge *in its subjective capacity;* and floats before it, but without thou thyself being conscious of such a presentation?

I. So it is.

Spirit. Canst thou not then adduce some more exact characteristics of the subjective and objective elements as they appear in consciousness?

I. The subjective appears to contain within itself the foundation of consciousness as regards its form, but by no means as regards its substance. That there is a consciousness, an inward perception and conception,—of this the foundation lies in itself; but that precisely this or that is conceived,—in this it is dependent on the objective, with which it is conjoined and by which it is likewise borne along. The objective, on the contrary, contains the foundation of its being within itself; it is in and for itself,—it is, as it is, because it is. The subjective appears as the still and passive

mirror of the objective; the latter floats before it. That the former should reflect images generally, lies in itself. That precisely this image and none other should be reflected, depends on the latter.

Spirit. The subjective, then, according to its essential nature, is precisely so constituted as thou hast previously described thy consciousness of an existence out of thyself to be?

I. It is true, and this agreement is remarkable. I begin to believe it half credible, that out of the internal laws of my own consciousness may proceed even the presentation of an existence out of myself, and independent of me; and that this presentation may at bottom be nothing more than the presentation of these laws themselves.

Spirit. And why only half credible?

I. Because I do not yet see why precisely such a presentation—a presentation of a mass extended through space—should arise.

Spirit. Thou hast already seen that it is only thine own sensation which thou extendest through space; and thou hast had some forebodings that it is by this extension in space alone that thy sensation becomes transformed for thee into something sensible. We have therefore to do at present only with space itself, and to explain its origin in consciousness.

I. So it is.

Spirit. Let us then make the attempt. I know that thou canst not become conscious of thy intelligent activity as such, in so far as it remains in its original and unchangeable unity;—*i. e.* in the condition which begins with thy very being, and can never be destroyed without at the same time destroying that being;—and such a consciousness therefore I do not ascribe to thee.

But thou canst become conscious of it in so far as it passes from one state of transition to another within the limits of this unchangeable unity. When thou dost represent it to thyself in the performance of this function, how does it appear to thee—this internal spiritual activity?

I. My spiritual faculty appears as if in a state of internal motion, swiftly passing from one point to another;—in short, as an extended line. A definite thought makes a point in this line.

Spirit. And why as an extended line?

I. Can I give a reason for that beyond the circle of which I cannot go without at the same time overstepping the limits of my own existence? It is so, absolutely.

Spirit. Thus, then, does a particular act of thy consciousness appear to thee. But what shape then is assumed, not by thy produced, but by thy inherited, knowledge, of which all specific thought is but the revival and farther definition?—how does this present itself to thee? Under what image does it appear?

I. Evidently as something in which one may draw lines and make points in all directions, namely, *as space.*

Spirit. Now then, it will be entirely clear to thee, how that, which really proceeds from thyself, may nevertheless, appear to thee as an existence external to thyself,—nay, must necessarily appear so.

Thou hast penetrated to the true source of the presentation of things out of thyself. This presentation is not perception, for thou perceivest thyself only;—as little is it thought, for things do not appear to thee as mere results of thought. It is an actual, and indeed absolute and immediate consciousness of an exist-

ence out of thyself, just as perception is an immediate consciousness of thine own condition. Do not permit thyself to be perplexed by sophists and half-philosophers; things do not appear to thee through any representation;—of the thing that exists, and that can exist, thou art immediately conscious;—and there is no other thing than that of which thou art conscious. Thou thyself art the thing; thou thyself, by virtue of thy finitude—the innermost law of thy being—art thus presented before thyself, and projected out of thyself; and all that thou perceivest out of thyself is still—thyself only. This consciousness has been well named INTUITION. In all consciousness I contemplate myself, for I am myself:—to the subjective, conscious being, consciousness is self-contemplation. And the objective, that which is contemplated and of which I am conscious, is also myself,—the same self which contemplates, but now floating as an objective presentation before the subjective. In this respect, consciousness is an active retrospect of my own intuitions; an observation of myself from my own position; a projection of myself out of myself by means of the only mode of action which is properly mine,—perception. I am a living faculty of vision. I see (*consciousness*) my own vision (*the thing of which I am conscious.*)

Hence this object is also thoroughly transparent to thy mind's eye, because it is thy mind itself. Thou dividest, limitest, determinest, the possible forms of things, and the relations of these forms, previous to all perception. No wonder,—for in so doing thou dividest, limitest, and determinest thine own knowledge, which undoubtedly is sufficiently known to thee. Thus does a knowledge of things become possible. It is not in the things, and cannot proceed out of them. It

proceeds from thee, and is indeed thine own nature.

There is no outward sense, for there is no outward perception. There is, however, an outward intuition;—not of things, but this outward intuition—this knowledge apparently external to the subjective being, and hovering before it,—is itself the thing, and there is no other. By means of this outward intuition are perception and sense regarded as external. It remains eternally true, for it is proved,—that I see or feel a surface,—my sight or feeling takes the shape of the sight or feeling of a surface. Space,—illuminated, transparent, palpable, penetrable space,—the purest image of my knowledge, is not seen, but is an intuitive possession of my own mind; in it even my faculty of vision itself is contained. The light is not out of, but in me, and I myself am the light. Thou hast already answered my question, "How dost thou know of thy sensations, of thy seeing, feeling, &c.?" by saying that thou hast an immediate knowledge or consciousness of them. Now, perhaps, thou wilt be able to define more exactly this immediate consciousness of sensation.

I. It must be a two-fold consciousness. Sensation is itself an immediate consciousness; for I am sensible of my own sensation. But from this there arises no knowledge of outward existence, but only the feeling of my own state. I am, however, originally, not merely a sensitive, but also an intuitive being; not merely a practical being, but also an intelligence. I intuitively contemplate my sensation itself, and thus there arises from myself and my own nature, the *cognition of an existence.* Sensation becomes transformed into its own object; my affections, as red, smooth, and the like, into a *something* red, smooth,

&c. out of myself; and this something, and my relative sensation, I intuitively contemplate in space, because the intuition itself is space. Thus does it become clear why I believe that I see or feel surfaces, which, in fact, I neither see nor feel. I intuitively regard my own sensation of sight or touch, as the sight or touch of a surface.

Spirit. Thou hast well understood me, or rather thyself.

I. But now it is not at all by means of an inference, either recognised or unrecognised, from the principle of causality, that the thing is originated for me; it floats immediately before me, and is presented to my consciousness without any process of reasoning. I cannot say, as I have formerly said, that perception becomes transformed into a something perceivable, for the perceivable, as such, has precedence in consciousness. It is not with an affection of myself, as red, smooth, or the like, that consciousness begins, but with a red, smooth object out of myself.

Spirit. If, however, thou wert obliged to explain what is red, smooth, and the like, couldst thou possibly make any other reply than that it was that by which thou wert affected in a certain manner that thou namest red, smooth, &c. ?

I. Certainly not,—if you were to ask me, and I were to enter upon the question and attempt an explanation. But originally no one asks me the question, nor do I ask it of myself. I forget myself entirely, and lose myself in my intuition of the object; become conscious, not of my own state, but only of an existence out of myself. Red, green, and the like, are properties of the thing; it is red or green, and this

is all. There can be no farther explanation, any more than there can be a farther explanation of these affections in me, on which we have already agreed. This is most obvious in the sensation of sight. Colour appears as something out of myself; and the common understanding of man, if left to itself, and without farther reflection, would scarcely be persuaded to describe red, green, &c. as that which excited within him a specific affection.

Spirit. But, doubtless, it would if asked regarding sweet or sour. It is not our business at present to inquire whether the impression made by means of sight be a pure sensation, or whether it may not rather be a middle term between sensation and intuition, and the bond by which they are united in our minds. But I admit thy assertion, and it is extremely welcome to me. Thou canst, indeed, lose thyself in the intuition; and unless thou directest particular attention to thyself, or takest an interest in some external action, thou dost so, naturally and necessarily. This is the remark to which the defenders of a groundless consciousness of external things appeal, when it is shown that the principle of causality, by which the existence of such things might be inferred, exists only in ourselves; they deny that any such inference is made, and, in so far as they refer to actual consciousness in particular cases, this cannot be disputed. These same defenders, when the nature of intuition is explained to them from the laws of intelligence itself, themselves draw this inference anew, and never weary of repeating that there must be something external to us which compels us to this belief.

I. Do not trouble thyself about them at present,

but instruct me. I have no preconceived opinion, and seek for truth only.

Spirit. Nevertheless, intuition necessarily proceeds from the perception of thine own state, although thou art not always clearly conscious of this perception, as thou hast already seen. Even in that consciousness in which thou losest thyself in the object, there is always something which is only possible by means of an unrecognised reference to thyself, and close observation of thine own state.

I. Consequently, at all times and places the consciousness of existence out of myself must be accompanied by an unobserved consciousness of myself?

Spirit. Just so.

I. The former being determined through the latter,—as it actually is?

Spirit. That is my meaning.

I. Prove this to me, and I shall be satisfied.

Spirit. Dost thou imagine only things in general as placed in space, or each of them individually as occupying a certain portion of space?

I. The latter,—each thing has its determinate bulk.

Spirit. And do different things occupy the same part of space?

I. By no means; they exclude each other. They are beside, over or under, behind, or before, each other;—nearer to me, or further from me.

Spirit. And how dost thou come to this measurement and arrangement of them in space? Is it by sensation?

I. How could that be, since space itself is no sensation?

Spirit. Or intuition?

I. This cannot be. Intuition is immediate and in-

fallible. What is contained in it does not appear as produced, and cannot deceive. But I must train myself to estimate, measure and deliberate upon, the size of an object, its distance, its position with respect to other objects. It is a truth known to every beginner, that we originally see all objects in the same line; that we learn to estimate their greater or lesser distances; that the child attempts to grasp distant objects as if they lay immediately before his eyes; and that one born blind who should suddenly receive sight would do the same. This conception of distances is therefore a judgment;—no intuition, but an arrangement of my different intuitions by means of the understanding. I may err in my estimate of the size, distance, &c. of an object; and the so-called optical deceptions are not deceptions of sight, but erroneous judgments formed concerning the size of the object, concerning the size of its different parts in relation to each other, and consequently concerning its true figure and its distance from me and from other objects. But it does really exist in space, as I contemplate it, and the colours which I see in it are likewise really seen by me;—and here there is no deception.

Spirit. And what then is the principle of this judgment,—to take the most distinct and easy case,—thy judgment of the proximity or distance of objects,—how dost thou estimate this distance?

I. Doubtless by the greater strength or feebleness of impressions otherwise equal. I see before me two objects of the same red colour. The one whose colour I see more vividly, I regard as the nearer: that whose colour seems to me fainter, as the more distant, and as so much the more distant as the colour seems fainter.

Spirit. Thus thou dost estimate the distance according to the degree of strength or weakness in the sensation; and this strength or weakness itself,—dost thou also estimate it?

I. Obviously only in so far as I take note of my own affections, and even of very slight differences in these.—Thou hast conquered! All consciousness of objects out of myself is determined by the clearness and exactitude of my consciousness of my own states, and in this consciousness there is always a conclusion drawn from the effect in myself to a cause out of myself.

Spirit. Thou art quickly vanquished; and I must now myself carry forward, in thy place, the controversy against myself. My argument can only apply to those cases in which an actual and deliberate estimate of the size, distance, and position, of objects takes place, and in which thou art conscious of making such an estimate. Thou wilt however admit that this is by no means the common case, and that for the most part thou rather becomest conscious of the size, distance, &c. of an object at the very same undivided moment in which thou becomest conscious of the object itself.

I. When once we learn to estimate the distances of objects by the strength of the impression, the rapidity of this judgment is merely the consequence of its frequent exercise. I have learnt, by a lifelong experience, rapidly to observe the strength of the impression and thereby to estimate the distance. My present conception is founded upon a combination, formerly made, of sensation, intuition, and previous judgments; although at the moment I am conscious only of the present conception. I no longer apprehend *generally*

red, green, or the like, out of myself, but a red or a green *at this, that, or the other distance;* but this last addition is merely a renewal of a judgment formerly arrived at by deliberate reflection.

Spirit. Has it not then, at length, become clear to thee whether thou discoverest the existence of things out of thyself by intuition, or by reasoning, or both,—and in how far by each of these?

I. Perfectly; and I believe that I have now attained the fullest insight into the origin of my conceptions of objects out of myself.

1. I am absolutely conscious of myself, because I am this *I*,—myself; and that partly as a practical being, partly as an intelligence. The first consciousness is Sensation, the second Intuition—unlimited space.
2. I cannot comprehend the unlimited, for I am finite. I therefore set apart, in thought, a certain portion of universal space, and place the former in a certain relation to the latter.
3. The measure of this limited portion of space is the extent of my own sensibility, according to a principle which may be thus expressed:—Whatever affects me in such or such a manner is to be placed, in space, in such or such relations to the other things which affect me.

The properties or attributes of the object proceed from the perception of my own internal state; the space which it fills, from intuitive contemplation. By a process of thought, both are conjoined; the former being added to the latter. It is so, assuredly, as we have said before:—that which is merely a state or affection of myself, by being transferred or projected into space becomes an attribute of the object; but

it is so projected into space, not by intuition, but by thought, by measuring, regulating thought. Not that this act is to be regarded as an intellectual discovery or creation; but only as a more exact definition, by means of thought, of something which is already given in sensation and intuition, independent of all thought.

Spirit. Whatever affects me in such or such a manner is to be placed in such or such relations:—thus dost thou reason in defining and arranging objects in space. But does not the declaration that a thing affects thee in a certain manner include the assumption that it affects thee generally?

I. Undoubtedly.

Spirit. And is any presentation of an external object possible, which is not in this manner limited and defined in space?

I. No; for no object exists in space generally, but each one in a determinate portion of space.

Spirit. So that in fact, whether thou art conscious of it or not, every external object is assumed by thee as affecting thyself, as certainly as it is assumed as filling a determinate portion of space?

I. That follows, certainly.

Spirit. And what kind of presentation is that of an object affecting thyself?

I. Evidently a thought; and indeed a thought founded on the principle of causality already mentioned. I see now, still more clearly, that the consciousness of the object is engrafted on my self-consciousness in two ways,—partly by intuition, and partly by thought founded on the principle of causality. The object, however strange it may seem, is at once the immediate object of my consciousness, and the result of deliberate thought

Spirit. In different respects, however. Thou must be capable of being conscious of this thought of the object?

I. Doubtless; although usually I am not so.

Spirit. Therefore to thy passive state, thy affection, thou dost superadd in thought an activity out of thyself, such as thou hast above described in the case of thy thought according to the principle of causality?

I. Yes.

Spirit. And with the same meaning and the same validity as thou didst describe it above. Thou thinkest so once for all, and must think so; thou canst not alter it, and canst know nothing more than that thou dost think so?

I. Nothing more. We have already investigated all this thoroughly.

Spirit. I said, thou 'dost assume an object:—in so far as it is so assumed, it is a product of thy own thought only?

I. Certainly, for this follows from the former.

Spirit. And what now is this object which is thus assumed according to the principle of causality?

I. A power out of myself.

Spirit. Which is neither revealed to thee by sensation nor by intuition?

I. No; I always remain perfectly conscious that I do not perceive it immediately, but only by means of its manifestations; although I ascribe to it an existence independent of myself. I am affected, there must therefore be something that affects me,—such is my thought.

Spirit. The object which is revealed to thee in intuition, and that which thou assumest by reasoning,

are thus very different things. That which is actually and immediately present before thee, spread out in space, is the object of intuition; the internal force within it, which is not present before thee, but whose existence thou art led to assert only by a process of reasoning, is the object of the understanding.

I. The internal force within it, saidst thou;—and now I bethink me, thou art right. I place this force also in space, and superadd it to the mass by which I regard space as filled.

Spirit. And what then, according to thy view, is the nature of the relation subsisting between this force and the mass?

I. The mass, with its properties, is itself the result and manifestation of the inward force. This force has two modes of operation:—one whereby it maintains itself, and assumes this particular form in which it appears; another upon me, by which it affects me in a particular manner.

Spirit. Thou hast formerly sought for another substratum for sensible attributes or qualities than the space which contains them; something besides this space, permanent amid the vicissitudes of perpetual change.

I. Yes, and this permanent substratum is found. It is force itself. This remains for ever the same amid all change, and it is this which assumes and supports all sensible attributes or qualities.

Spirit. Let us cast a glance back on all that we have now established. Thou feelest thyself in a certain state, affected in a certain manner, which thou callest red, smooth, sweet, and so on. Of this thou knowest nothing, but simply that thou feelest, and feel-

est in this particular manner. Or dost thou know more than mere sensation ?

I. No.

Spirit. Further, it is by thine own nature as an intelligence, that there is space spread out before thee; —or dost thou know anything more than this concerning space?

I. By no means.

Spirit. Between that state of simple sensation, and this space which is spread out before thee, there is not the smallest connexion except that they are both present in thy consciousness. Or dost thou perceive any other connexion between them?

I. I see none.

Spirit. But thou art a thinking, as well as a sensitive and intuitive, being; and yet neither dost thou *know* anything more of this matter, than that so thou art. Thou dost not merely feel thy sensible state,— thou canst also conceive of it in thought; but it affords thee no complete thought; thou art compelled to add something to it, an external foundation, a foreign power. Or dost thou know more of it than that thou dost so think, and that thou art compelled so to think?

I. I can know nothing more respecting it. I cannot proceed beyond my thought; for simply because I think it does it become my thought and fall under the inevitable laws of my being.

Spirit. Through this thought of thine, there first arises a connexion between thy own state which thou feelest, and the space which thou dost intuitively contemplate; thou supposest in the latter the foundation of the former. Is it not so?

I. It is so. Thou hast clearly proved that I pro-

duce this connexion in my consciousness by my own thought only, and that such a connexion is neither directly felt, nor intuitively perceived. But of any connexion beyond the limits of my consciousness I cannot speak; I cannot even describe such a connexion in any manner of way; for even in speaking of it I must be conscious of it; and, since this consciousness can only be a thought, the connexion itself could be nothing more than a thought; and this is precisely the same connexion which occurs in my ordinary natural consciousness, and no other. I cannot proceed a hair's-breadth beyond this consciousness, any more than I can spring out of myself. All attempts to conceive of an absolute connexion between things *in themselves,* and the *I in itself,* are but attempts to ignore our own thought,—a strange forgetfulness of the undeniable fact that we can have no thought without having—thought it. A thing *in itself* is a thought;—this, namely, that there is a great thought which yet no man has ever comprehended.

Spirit. From thee then I need fear no objection to the principle now established:—*that our consciousness of things out of ourselves is absolutely nothing more than the product of our own presentative faculty,* and that, with regard to external things, we can produce in this way nothing more than simply what we know, *i. e.* what is established by means of our consciousness itself, as the result of our being possessed the consciousness *generally* and of this particular determinate consciousness subject to such and such laws.

I. I cannot refute this. It is so.

Spirit. Thou canst not then object to the bolder statement of the same proposition; that in that which

we call knowledge and observation of outward things, we at all times recognise and observe ourselves only; and that in all our consciousness we know of nothing whatever but of ourselves and of our own determinate states.

I say, thou wilt not be able to advance aught against this proposition; for if the external world *generally* arises for us only through our own consciousness, what is particular and multiform in this external world can arise in no other way; and if the connexion between what is external to us and ourselves is merely a connexion in our own thought, then is the connexion of the multifarious objects of the external world among themselves undoubtedly this and no other. As clearly as I have now pointed out to thee the origin of this system of objects beyond thyself and their relation to thee, could I also show thee the law according to which there arises an infinite multiplicity of such objects, mutually connected, reciprocally determining each other with rigid necessity, and thus forming a complete world-system, as thou thyself hast well described it; and I only spare myself this task because I find that thou hast already admitted the conclusion for the sake of which alone I should have undertaken it.

I. I see it all, and must assent to it.

Spirit. And with this insight, mortal, be free, and for ever released from the fear which has degraded and tormented thee! Thou wilt no longer tremble at a necessity which exists only in thine own thought; no longer fear to be crushed by things which are the product of thine own mind; no longer place thyself, the thinking being, in the same class with the thoughts which proceed from thee. As long as thou couldst

believe that a system of things, such as thou hast described, really existed out of, and independently of, thee, and that thou thyself mightst be but a link in this chain, such a fear was well grounded. Now when thou hast seen that all this exists only in and through thyself, thou wilt doubtless no longer fear that which thou dost now recognise as thine own creation.

It was from this fear that I wished to set thee free. Thou art delivered from it, and I now leave thee to thyself.

I. Stay, deceitful Spirit! Is this all the wisdom towards which thou hast directed my hopes, and dost thou boast that thou hast set me free? Thou hast set me free, it is true:—thou hast absolved me from all dependence; for thou hast transformed myself, and everything around me on which I could possibly be dependent, into nothing. Thou hast abolished necessity by annihilating all existence.

Spirit. Is the danger so great?

I. And thou canst jest!—According to thy system—

Spirit. My system? Whatever we have agreed upon, we have produced in common; we have laboured together, and thou hast understood everything as well as I myself. But it would still be difficult for thee at present even to guess at my true and perfect mode of thought.

I. Call thy thoughts by what name thou wilt; by all that thou hast hitherto said, there is nothing, absolutely nothing but presentations,—modes of consciousness, and of consciousness only. But a presentation is to me only the picture, the shadow, of a reality; in

itself it cannot satisfy me, and has not the smallest worth. I might be content that this material world beyond me should vanish into a mere picture, or be dissolved into a shadow; I am not dependent on it:—but according to thy previous reasoning, I myself disappear no less than it; I myself am transformed into a mere presentation, without meaning and without purpose. Or tell me, is it otherwise?

Spirit. I say nothing in my own name. Examine,—help thyself!

I. I appear to myself as a body existing in space, with organs of sense and of action, as a physical force governed by a will. Of all this thou wilt say, as thou hast before said of objects out of myself, the thinking being, that it is a product of sensation, intuition, and thought combined.

Spirit. Undoubtedly. I will even show thee, step by step, if thou desirest it, the laws according to which thou appearest to thyself in consciousness as an organic body, with such and such senses,—as a physical force, &c., and thou wilt be compelled to admit the truth of what I show thee.

I. I foresee that result. As I have been compelled to admit that what I call sweet, red, hard, and so on, is nothing more than my own affection; and that only by intuition and thought it is transposed out of myself into space, and regarded as the property of something existing independently of me; so shall I also be compelled to admit that this body, with all its organs, is nothing but a sensible manifestation, in a determinate portion of space, of myself the inward thinking being;—that *I*, the spiritual entity, the pure intelligence, and *I*, the bodily frame in the physical world, are one and the same, merely viewed from two different sides,

and conceived of by two different faculties;—the first by pure thought, the second by external intuition.

Spirit. This would certainly be the result of any inquiry that might be instituted.

I. And this thinking, spiritual entity, this intelligence which by intuition is transformed into a material body,—what can even it be, according to these principles, but a product of my own thought, something merely conceived of by me because I am compelled to imagine its existence by virtue of a law to me wholly inconceivable, proceeding from nothing and tending to nothing.

Spirit. It is possible.

I. Thou becomest hesitating and faint-hearted. It is not possible only: it is necessary, according to these principles.

This perceiving, thinking, willing, intelligent entity, or whatever else thou mayest name that which possesses the faculties of perception, thought, and so forth;—that in which these faculties inhere, or in whatever other way thou mayest express this thought;—how do I attain a knowledge of it? Am I immediately conscious of it? How can I be? It is only of actual and specific *acts* of perception, thought, will, &c., as of particular occurrences, that I am immediately conscious; not of the capacities through which they are performed, and still less of a being in whom these capacities inhere. I perceive, directly and intuitively, this specific thought which occupies me during the present moment, and other specific thoughts in other moments; and here this inward intellectual intuition, this immediate consciousness, ends. This inward intuitive thought, now becomes itself an object of thought; but according to the laws under which

alone I can think, it seems to me imperfect and incomplete, just as formerly the thought of my sensible states was but an imperfect thought. As formerly to mere passivity I unconsciously superadded in thought an active element, so here to my determinate state (*my actual thought or will*) I superadd a determinable element (*an infinite, possible thought or will*) simply because *I must* do so, and for the same reason, but without being conscious of this mental opposition. This manifold possible thought I further comprehend as one definite whole;—once more because I must do so, since I am unable to comprehend anything indefinite,—and thus I obtain the idea of a *finite capacity of thought,* and—since this idea carries with it the notion of a something independent of the thought itself—of a being or entity which possesses this capacity.

But, on higher principles, it may be made still more conceivable how this thinking being is produced by its own thought. Thought in itself is genetic, assuming the previous creation of an object immediately revealed, and occupying itself with the description of this object. Intuition gives the naked fact, and nothing more. Thought explains this fact, and unites it to another, not found in intuition, but produced purely by thought itself, from which it, the fact, proceeds. So here. I am conscious of a determinate thought; thus far, and no farther, does intuitive consciousness carry me. I think this determinate thought, that is, I bring it forth from an indeterminate, but determinable, possibility of thought. In this way I proceed with everything determinate which is presented in immediate consciousness, and thus arise for me all those series of capacities, and of beings possessing these capacities, whose existence I assume.

Spirit. Even with respect to thyself, therefore, thou art conscious only that thou feelest, perceivest, or thinkest, in this or that determinate manner

I. That *I* feel, *I* perceive, *I* think?—that I, as the efficient principle, produce the sensation, the intuition, the thought? By no means! Not even so much as this have thy principles left me.

Spirit. Possibly.

I. Necessarily;—for see: All that I know is my consciousness itself. All consciousness is either an immediate or a mediate consciousness. The first is self-consciousness; the second consciousness of that which is not myself. What I call *I* is therefore absolutely nothing more than a certain modification of consciousness, which is called *I* just because it is immediate, returning into itself, and not directed outward. Since all other consciousness is possible only under the condition of this immediate consciousness, it is obvious that this consciousness which is called *I* must accompany all my other conceptions, be necessarily contained in them, although not always clearly perceived by me, and that in each moment of my consciousness I must refer everything to this *I*, and not to the particular thing out of myself thought of at the moment. In this way the *I* would at every moment vanish and reappear; and for every new conception a new *I* would arise, and this *I* would never signify anything more than—*not the thing.*

This scattered self-consciousness is now combined by thought,—by mere thought, I say—and presented in the unity of a supposed capacity of thought. According to this supposition, all conceptions which are accompanied by the immediate consciousness already spoken of, must proceed from one and the same ca-

pacity, which inheres in one and the same entity; and thus there arises for me the notion of the identity and personality of my *I*, and of an efficient and real power in this person,—necessarily a mere fiction, since this capacity and this entity are themselves only suppositions.

Spirit. Thou reasonest correctly.

I. And thou hast pleasure in this! I may then indeed say "it is thought,"—and yet I can scarcely say even this;—rather, strictly speaking, I ought to say "the thought appears that I feel, perceive, think,"—but by no means "that I feel, perceive, think." The first only is fact; the second is an imaginary addition to the fact.

Spirit. It is well expressed.

I. There is nothing enduring, either out of me, or in me, but only a ceaseless change. I know of no being, not even of my own. There is no being. I myself absolutely know not, and am not. Pictures are:—they are the only things which exist, and they know of themselves after the fashion of pictures:—pictures which float past without there being anything past which they float; which, by means of like pictures, are connected with each other:—pictures without anything which is pictured in them, without significance and without aim. I myself am one of these pictures;—nay, I am not even this, but merely a confused picture of the pictures. All reality is transformed into a strange dream, without a life which is dreamed of, and without a mind which dreams it;—into a dream which is woven together in a dream of itself. Intuition is the dream; thought,—the source of all the being and all the reality which I imagine, of

my own being, my own powers, and my own purposes,—is the dream of that dream.

Spirit. Thou hast well understood it all. Employ the sharpest expressions to make this result hateful, since thou must submit to it. And this thou must do. Thou hast clearly seen that it cannot be otherwise. Or wilt thou now retract thy admissions, and justify thy retractation on principle?

I. By no means. I have seen, and now see clearly, that it is so;—yet I cannot believe it.

Spirit. Thou seest it clearly, and yet canst not believe it? That is a different matter.

I. Thou art a profligate spirit: thy knowledge itself is profligacy, and springs from profligacy; and I cannot thank thee for having led me on this path!

Spirit. Short-sighted mortal! When men venture to look into being, and see as far as themselves, and a little further,—such as thou art call it profligacy. I have allowed thee to deduce the results of our inquiry in thine own way, to analyze them, and to clothe them in hateful expressions. Didst thou then think that these results were less known to me than to thyself,—that I did not understand, as well as thou, how by these principles all reality was thoroughly annihilated, and transformed into a dream? Didst thou then take me for a blind admirer and advocate of this system, as a complete system of the human mind?

Thou didst desire *to know,* and thou hadst taken a wrong road. Thou didst seek knowledge where no knowledge can reach; and hadst even persuaded thyself that thou hadst obtained an insight into something which is opposed to the very nature of all in-

sight. I found thee in this condition. I wished to free thee from thy false knowledge; but by no means to bring thee the true.

Thou didst desire to know of thy knowledge. Art thou surprised that in this way thou didst discover nothing more than that of which thou desiredst to know,—thy knowledge itself; and wouldst thou have had it otherwise? What has its origin in and through knowledge, is merely knowledge. All knowledge, however, is but pictures, representations; and there is always something awanting in it,—that which corresponds to the representation. This want cannot be supplied by knowledge; a system of mere knowledge is necessarily a system of mere pictures, wholly without reality, significance or aim. Didst thou expect anything else? Wouldst thou change the very nature of thy mind, and desire thy knowledge to be something more than knowledge?

The reality, in which thou didst formerly believe,—a material world existing independently of thee, of which thou didst fear to become the slave,—has vanished; for this whole material world arises only through knowledge, and is itself our knowledge; but knowledge is not reality, just because it is knowledge. Thou hast seen through the illusion; and, without belying thy better insight, thou canst never again give thyself up to it. This is the sole merit which I claim for the system which we have together discovered;—it destroys and annihilates error. It cannot give us truth, for in itself it is absolutely empty. Thou dost now seek, and with good right as I well know, something real lying beyond mere appearance, another reality

than that which has thus been annihilated. But in vain wouldst thou labour to create this reality by means of thy knowledge or out of thy knowledge; or to embrace it by thy understanding. If thou hast no other organ by which to apprehend it, thou wilt never find it.

But thou hast such an organ. Arouse and animate it, and thou wilt attain to perfect tranquillity. I leave thee alone with thyself.

BOOK III.

FAITH.

TERRIBLE Spirit, thy discourse has smitten me to the ground. But thou referrest me to myself, and what were I could anything out of myself irrecoverably cast me down? I will,—yes, surely I will follow thy counsel.

What seekest thou, then, my complaining heart? What is it that excites thee against a system to which my understanding cannot raise the slightest objection?

This it is:—I demand something beyond a mere presentation or conception; something that is, has been, and will be, even if the presentation were not; and which the presentation only records, without producing it, or in the smallest degree changing it. A mere presentation I now see to be a deceptive show; my presentations must have a meaning beneath them, and if my entire knowledge revealed to me nothing but knowledge, I would be defrauded of my whole life. That there is nothing whatever but my presentations or conceptions, is, to the natural sense of mankind, a silly and ridiculous conceit which no man can seriously entertain, and which requires no refutation. To the better-informed judgment, which knows the deep, and, *by mere reasoning*, irrefragable grounds for this assertion, it is a prostrating, annihilating thought.

And what, then, is this something lying beyond all

presentation, towards which I stretch forward with such ardent longing? What is the power with which it draws me towards it? What is the central point in my soul to which it is attached, and with which only it can be effaced?

"Not merely TO KNOW, but according to thy knowledge TO DO, is thy vocation:"—thus is it loudly proclaimed in the innermost depths of my soul, as soon as I recollect myself for a moment, and turn my observation upon myself. "Not for idle contemplation of thyself, not for brooding over devout sensations;—no, for action art thou here; thine action, and thine action alone, determines thy worth."

This voice leads me out from presentation, from mere cognition, to something which lies beyond it and is entirely opposed to it; to something which is greater and higher than all knowledge, and which contains within itself the end and object of all knowledge. When I act, I doubtless know that I act, and how I act; nevertheless this knowledge is not the act itself, but only the observation of it. This voice thus announces to me precisely that which I sought; a something lying beyond mere knowledge, and, in its nature, wholly independent of knowledge.

Thus it is, I know it immediately. But, having once entered within the domain of speculation, the doubt which has been awakened within me will secretly endure and will continue to disturb me. Since I have placed myself in this position, I can obtain no complete satisfaction until everything which I accept is justified before the tribunal of speculation. I have thus to ask myself,—how is it thus? Whence arises that voice in my soul which directs me to something beyond mere presentation and knowledge?

There is within me an impulse to absolute, independent self-activity. Nothing is more insupportable to me, than to be merely by another, for another, and through another; I must be something for myself and by myself alone. This impulse I feel along with the perception of my own existence, it is inseparably united to my consciousness of myself.

I explain this feeling to myself by reflection; and, as it were, add to this blind impulse the power of sight by means of thought. According to this impulse I must act as an absolutely independent being:—thus I understand and translate the impulse. I must be independent. Who am I? Subject and object in one,—the conscious being and that of which I am conscious, gifted with intuitive knowledge and myself revealed in that intuition, the thinking mind and myself the object of the thought—inseparable, and ever present to each other. As both, must I be what I am, absolutely by myself alone;—by myself originate conceptions,—by myself produce a condition of things lying beyond these conceptions. But how is the latter possible? With nothing I cannot connect any being whatsoever; from nothing there can never arise something; my objective thought is necessarily mediative only. But any being which is connected with another being becomes thereby dependent;—it is no longer a primary, original, and genetic, but only a secondary and derived being. I am constrained to connect myself with something;—with another being I cannot connect myself without losing that independence which is the condition of my own existence.

My conception and origination of *a purpose,* however, is, by its very nature, absolutely free,—producing something out of nothing. With such a conception I

must connect my activity, in order that it may be possible to regard it as free, and as proceeding absolutely from myself alone.

In the following manner therefore do I conceive of my independence as *I*. I ascribe to myself the power of originating a conception simply because I originate it, of originating *this* conception simply because I originate *this* one,—by the absolute sovereignty of myself as an intelligence. I further ascribe to myself the power of manifesting this conception beyond itself by means of an action;—ascribe to myself a real, active power, capable of producing something beyond itself,—a power which is entirely different from the mere power of conception. These conceptions, which are called conceptions of design, or purposes, are not, like the conceptions of mere knowledge, copies of something already existing, but rather types of something yet to be; the real power lies beyond them, and is *in itself* independent of them;—it only receives from them its immediate determinations, which are apprehended by knowledge. Such an independent power it is that, in consequence of this impulse, I ascribe to myself.

Here then, it appears, is the point at which consciousness connects itself with reality;—the real efficiency of my conception, and the real power of action which, in consequence of it, I am compelled to ascribe to myself, is this point. Let it be as it may with the reality of a sensible world beyond me; I possess reality and comprehend it,—it lies within my own being, it is native to myself.

I conceive this, my real power of action, in thought, but I do not create it by thought. The immediate feeling of my impulse to independent activity lies at the foundation of this thought; the thought does no more

than portray this feeling, and accept it in its own form,—the form of thought. This procedure may, I think, be vindicated before the tribunal of speculation.

What! Shall I, once more, knowingly and intentionally deceive myself? This procedure can by no means be justified before that strict tribunal.

I feel within me an impulse and an effort towards outward activity; this appears to be true, and to be the only truth belonging to the matter. Since it is I who feel this impulse, and since I cannot pass beyond myself, either with my whole consciousness, or in particular with my capacity of sensation,—since this *I* itself is the last point at which I am conscious of this impulse, it certainly appears to me as an impulse founded in myself, to an activity also founded in myself. Might it not be however that this impulse, although unperceived by me, is in reality the impulse of a foreign power invisible to me, and that notion of independence merely a delusion, arising from my sphere of vision being limited to myself alone? I have no reason to assume this, but just as little reason to deny it. I must confess that I absolutely know nothing, and can know nothing, about it.

Do I then indeed *feel* that real power of free action, which, strangely enough, I ascribe to myself without knowing anything of it? By no means;—it is merely the *determinable* element, which by the well-known laws of thought whereby all capacities and all powers arise, we are compelled to add in imagination to the *determinate* element—the real action, which itself is, in like manner, only an assumption.

Is that procession, from the mere conception to an

imaginary realization of it, anything more than the usual and well-known procedure of all objective thought, which always strives to be, not mere thought, but something more? By what dishonesty can this procedure be made of more value here than in any other case?—can it possess any deeper significance, when to the conception of a thought it adds a realization of this thought, than when to the conception of this table it adds an actual and present table? "The conception of a purpose, a particular determination of events in me, appears in a double shape,—partly as *subjective*—a Thought; partly as *objective*—an Action." What reason, which would not unquestionably itself stand in need of a genetic deduction, could I adduce against this explanation?

I say that I feel this impulse:—it is therefore I myself who say so, and think so while I say it? Do I then really feel, or only think that I feel? Is not all which I call feeling only a presentation produced by my objective process of thought, and indeed the first transition point of all objectivity? And then again, do I really think, or do I merely think that I think? And do I think that I really think, or merely that I possess the idea of thinking? What can hinder speculation from raising such questions, and continuing to raise them without end? What can I answer, and where is there a point at which I can command such questionings to cease? I know, and must admit, that each definite act of consciousness may be made the subject of reflection, and a new consciousness of the first consciousness may thus be created; and that thereby the immediate consciousness is raised a step higher, and the first consciousness darkened and made doubtful; and that to this ladder there is no highest step. I

know that all scepticism rests upon this process, and that the system which has so violently prostrated me is founded on the adoption and the clear consciousness of it.

I know that if I am not merely to play another perplexing game with this system, but intend really and practically to adopt it, I must refuse obedience to that voice within me. I cannot *will* to act, for according to that system I cannot *know* whether I can really act or not:—I can never believe that I truly act; that which seems to be my action must appear to me as entirely without meaning, as a mere delusive picture. All earnestness and all interest is withdrawn from my life; and life, as well as thought, is transformed into a mere play, which proceeds from nothing and tends to nothing.

Shall I then refuse obedience to that inward voice? I will not do so. I will freely accept the vocation which this impulse assigns to me, and in this resolution I will lay hold at once of thought, in all its reality and truthfulness, and on the reality of all things which are presupposed therein, I will restrict myself to the position of natural thought in which this impulse places me, and cast from me all those over-refined and subtile inquiries which alone could make me doubtful of its truth.

I understand thee now, sublime Spirit! I have found the organ by which to apprehend this reality, and, with this, probably all other reality. Knowledge is not this organ:—no knowledge can be its own foundation, its own proof; every knowledge presupposes another higher knowledge on which it is founded, and to this ascent there is no end. It is FAITH, that voluntary acquiescence in the view which is naturally

presented to us, because only through this view we can fulfil our vocation;—this it is, which first lends a sanction to knowledge, and raises to certainty and conviction that which without it might be mere delusion. It is not knowledge, but a resolution of the will to admit the validity of knowledge.

Let me hold fast for ever by this doctrine, which is no mere verbal distinction, but a true and deep one, bearing with it the most important consequences for my whole existence and character. All my conviction is but faith; and it proceeds from the will, not from the understanding. Knowing this, I will enter upon no disputation, because I foresee that thereby nothing can be gained; I will not suffer myself to be perplexed by it, for the source of my conviction lies higher than all disputation; I will not suffer myself to entertain the desire of pressing this conviction on others by reasoning, and I will not be surprised if such an undertaking should fail. I have adopted my mode of thinking first of all for myself, not for others, and before myself only will I justify it. He who possesses the honest, upright purpose of which I am conscious, will also attain a similar conviction; but without that, this conviction can in no way be attained; Now that I know this, I also know from what point all culture of myself and others must proceed; from the will, not from the understanding. If the former be only fixedly and honestly directed towards the Good, the latter will of itself apprehend the True. Should the latter only be exercised, whilst the former remains neglected, there can arise nothing whatever but a dexterity in groping after vain and empty refinements, throughout the absolute void inane. Now that I know this, I am able to confute all false knowledge that may rise in oppo-

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sition to my faith. I know that every pretended truth, produced by mere speculative thought, and not founded upon faith, is assuredly false and surreptitious; for mere knowledge, thus produced, leads only to the conviction that we can know nothing. I know that such false knowledge never can discover anything but what it has previously placed in its premises through faith, from which it probably draws conclusions which are wholly false. Now that I know this, I possess the touchstone of all truth and of all conviction. Conscience alone is the root of all truth: whatever is opposed to conscience, or stands in the way of the fulfilment of her behests, is assuredly false; and it is impossible for me to arrive at a conviction of its truth, even if I should be unable to discover the fallacies by which it is produced.

So has it been with all men who have ever seen the light of this world. Without being conscious of it, they apprehend all the reality which has an existence for them, through faith alone; and this faith forces itself on them simultaneously with their existence;—it is born with them. How could it be otherwise? If in mere knowledge, in mere perception and reflection, there is no ground for regarding our mental presentations as more than mere pictures which necessarily pass before our view, why do we yet regard all of them as more than this, and assume, as their foundation, something which exists independently of all presentation? If we all possess the capacity and the instinct to proceed beyond our first natural view of things, why do so few actually go beyond it, and why do we even defend ourselves, with a sort of bitterness, from every motive by which others try to persuade us to this course? What is it which holds us confined

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within this first natural belief? Not inferences of reason, for there are none such; it is the interest we have in a reality which we desire to produce;—the good, absolutely for its own sake,—the common and sensuous, for the sake of the enjoyment they afford. No one who lives can divest himself of this interest, and just as little can he cast off the faith which this interest brings with it. We are all born in faith;—he who is blind, follows blindly the secret and irresistible impulse; he who sees, follows by sight, and believes because he resolves to believe.

What unity and completeness does this view present!—what dignity does it confer on human nature! Our thought is not founded on itself alone, independently of our impulses and affections;—man does not consist of two independent and separate elements; he is absolutely one. All our thought is founded on our impulses;—as a man's affections are, so is his knowledge. These impulses compel us to a certain mode of thought only so long as we do not perceive the constraint; the constraint vanishes the moment it is perceived; and it is then no longer the impulse by itself, but we ourselves, according to our impulse, who form our own system of thought.

But I shall open my eyes; shall learn thoroughly to know myself; shall recognise that constraint;—this is my vocation. I shall thus, and under that supposition I shall necessarily, form my own mode of thought. Then I shall stand absolutely independent, thoroughly equipt and perfected through my own act and deed. The primitive source of all my other thought and of my life itself, that from which everything proceeds

which can have an existence in me, for me, or through me, the innermost spirit of my spirit,—is no longer a foreign power, but it is, in the strictest possible sense, the product of my own will. I am wholly my own creation. I might have followed blindly the leading of my spiritual nature. But I would not be a work of Nature but of myself, and I have become so even by means of this resolution. By endless subtilties I might have made the natural conviction of my own mind dark and doubtful. But I have accepted it with freedom, simply because I resolved to accept it. I have chosen the system which I have now adopted with settled purpose and deliberation from among other possible modes of thought, because I have recognised in it the only one consistent with my dignity and my vocation. With freedom and consciousness I have returned to the point at which Nature had left me. I accept that which she announces;—but I do not accept it because I must; I believe it because I will.

The exalted vocation of my understanding fills me with reverence. It is no longer the deceptive mirror which reflects a series of empty pictures, proceeding from nothing and tending to nothing; it is bestowed upon me for a great purpose. Its cultivation for this purpose is entrusted to me; it is placed in my hands, and at my hands it will be required.—It is placed in my hands. I know immediately,—and here my faith accepts the testimony of my consciousness without farther criticism,—I know that I am not placed under the necessity of allowing my thoughts to float about without direction or purpose, but that I can voluntarily arouse and direct my attention to one object, or turn

it away again towards another;—know that it is neither a blind necessity which compels me to a certain mode of thought, nor an empty chance which runs riot with my thoughts; but that it is I who think, and that I can think of that whereof I determine to think. Thus by reflection I have discovered something more; I have discovered that I myself, by my own act alone, produce my whole system of thought and the particular view which I take of truth in general; since it remains with me either by over-refinement to deprive myself of all sense of truth, or to yield myself to it with faithful obedience. My whole mode of thought, and the cultivation which my understanding receives, as well as the objects to which I direct it, depend entirely on myself. True insight is merit;—the perversion of my capacity for knowledge, thoughtlessness, obscurity, error, and unbelief, are guilt.

There is but one point towards which I have unceasingly to direct all my attention,—namely, what I *ought to do,* and how I may best fulfil the obligation. All my thoughts must have a bearing on my actions, and must be capable of being considered as means, however remote, to this end; otherwise they are an idle and aimless show, a mere waste of time and strength, the perversion of a noble power which is entrusted to me for a very different end.

I dare hope, I dare surely promise myself, to follow out this undertaking with good results. The Nature on which I have to act is not a foreign element, called into existence without reference to me, into which I cannot penetrate. It is moulded by my own laws of thought, and must be in harmony with them; it must be thoroughly transparent, knowable and penetrable to me, even to its inmost recesses. In all its phenom-

ena it expresses nothing but the connexions and relations of my own being to myself; and as surely as I may hope to know myself, so surely may I expect to comprehend it. Let me seek only that which I ought to seek, and I shall find; let me ask only that which I ought to ask, and I shall receive an answer.

I.

That voice within my soul in which I believe, and on account of which I believe in every other thing to which I attach credence, does not command me merely to act *in general.* This is impossible; all these general principles are formed only through my own voluntary observation and reflection, applied to many individual facts; but never in themselves express any fact whatever. This voice of my conscience announces to me precisely what I ought to do, and what leave undone, in every particular situation of life; it accompanies me, if I will but listen to it with attention, through all the events of my life, and never refuses me its reward where I am called upon to act. It carries with it immediate conviction, and irresistibly compels my assent to its behests:—it is impossible for me to contend against it.

To listen to it, to obey it honestly and unreservedly, without fear or equivocation,—this is my true vocation, the whole end and purpose of my existence. My life ceases to be an empty play without truth or significance. There is something that must absolutely be done for its own sake alone;—that which conscience demands of me in this particular situation of life it is mine to do, for this only I am here;—to know it, I have understanding;

to perform it, I have power. Through this edict of conscience alone, truth and reality are introduced into my conceptions. I cannot refuse them my attention and my obedience without thereby surrendering the very purpose of my existence.

Hence I cannot withhold my belief from the reality which they announce, without at the same time renouncing my vocation. It is absolutely true, without farther proof or confirmation,—nay, it is the first truth, and the foundation of all other truth and certainty, that this voice must be obeyed; and therefore everything becomes to me true and certain, the truth and certainty of which is assumed in the possibility of such obedience.

There appear before me in space, certain phenomena to which I transfer the idea of myself;—I conceive of them as beings like myself. Speculation, when carried out to its last results, has indeed taught me, or would teach me, that these supposed rational beings out of myself are but the products of my own presentative power; that, according to certain laws of my thought, I am compelled to represent out of myself my conception of myself; and that, according to the same laws, I can transfer this conception only to certain definite intuitions. But the voice of my conscience thus speaks:—"Whatever these beings may be in and for themselves, thou shalt act towards them as self-existent, free, substantive beings, wholly independent of thee. Assume it as already known, that they can give a purpose to their own being wholly by themselves, and quite independently of thee; never interrupt the accomplishment of this purpose, but rather further it to the utmost of thy power. Honour their freedom, lovingly take up their purposes as if they

were thine own." Thus ought I to act:—by this course of action *ought* all my thought to be guided,—nay, it *shall* and *must* necessarily be so, if I have resolved to obey the voice of my conscience. Hence I shall always regard these beings as in possession of an existence for themselves wholly independent of mine, as capable of forming and carrying out their own purposes;—from this point of view, I shall never be able to conceive of them otherwise, and my previous speculations regarding them shall vanish like an empty dream.—I *think* of them as beings like myself, I have said; but strictly speaking, it is not by mere thought that they are first presented to me as such. It is by the voice of my conscience,—by the command:—"Here set a limit to thy freedom; here recognise and reverence purposes which are not thine own." This it is which is first translated into the thought, "Here, certainly and truly, are beings like myself, free and independent." To view them otherwise, I must in action renounce, and in speculation disregard, the voice of my conscience.

Other phenomena present themselves before me which I do not regard as beings like myself, but as things irrational. Speculation finds no difficulty in showing how the conception of such things is developed solely from my own presentative faculty and its necessary modes of activity. But I apprehend these things, also, through want, desire, and enjoyment. Not by the mental conception, but by hunger, thirst, and their satisfaction, does anything become for me food and drink. I am necessitated to believe in the reality of that which threatens my sensuous existence, or in that which alone is able to maintain it. Conscience enters the field in order that it may at once

sanctify and restrain this natural impulse. "Thou shalt maintain, exercise, and strengthen thyself and thy physical powers, for they have been taken account of in the plans of reason. But thou canst maintain them only by legitimate use, conformable to their nature. There are also, besides thee, many other beings like thyself, whose powers have been counted upon like thine own, and can be maintained only in the same way as thine own. Concede to them the same privilege that has been allowed to thee. Respect what belongs to them as their possession;—use what belongs to thee legitimately as thine own." Thus ought I to act,—according to this course of action must I think. I am compelled to regard these things as standing under their own natural laws, independent of, though perceivable by me; and therefore to ascribe to them an independent existence. I am compelled to believe in such laws; the task of investigating them is set before me, and that empty speculation vanishes like a mist when the genial sun appears.

In short, there is for me absolutely no such thing as an existence which has no relation to myself, and which I contemplate merely for the sake of contemplating it;—whatever has an existence for me, has it only through its relation to my own being. But there is, in the highest sense, only one relation to me possible, all others are but subordinate forms of this:—my vocation to moral activity. My world is the object and sphere of my duties, and absolutely nothing more; there is no other world for me, and no other qualities of my world than what are implied in this;—my whole united capacity, all finite capacity, is insufficient to comprehend any other. Whatever possesses an existence for me, can bring its existence and reality

into contact with me only through this relation, and only through this relation do I comprehend it:—for any other existence than this I have no organ whatever.

To the question, whether, in deed and in fact, such a world exists as that which I represent to myself, I can give no answer more fundamental, more raised above all doubt, than this:—I have most certainly and truly, these determinate duties, which announce themselves to me as duties towards certain objects, to be fulfilled by means of certain materials;—duties which I cannot otherwise conceive of, and cannot otherwise fulfil, than within such a world as I represent to myself. Even to one who had never meditated on his own moral vocation, if there could be such a one, or who, if he had given it some general consideration, had, at least, never entertained the slightest purpose of fulfilling it at any time within an indefinite futurity,—even for him, his sensuous world, and his belief in its reality, arises in no other manner than from his ideas of a moral world. If he do not apprehend it by the thought of his duties, he certainly does so by the demand for his rights. What he perhaps never requires of himself, he does certainly exact from others in their conduct towards him,—that they should treat him with propriety, consideration, and respect, not as an irrational thing, but as a free and independent being;—and thus, by supposing in them an ability to comply with his own demands, he is compelled also to regard them as themselves considerate, free, and independent of the dominion of mere natural power. Even should he never propose to himself any other purpose in his use and enjoyment of surrounding objects but simply that of enjoying them, he at least demands this enjoy-

ment as a right, in the possession of which he claims to be left undisturbed by others; and thus he apprehends even the irrational world of sense by means of a moral idea. These claims of respect for his rationality, independence, and preservation, no one can resign who possesses a conscious existence; and with these claims, at least, there is united in his soul, earnestness, renunciation of doubt, and faith in a reality, even if they be not associated with the recognition of a moral law within him. Take the man who denies his own moral vocation, and thy existence, and the existence of a material world, except as a mere futile effort in which speculation tries her strength,—approach him practically, apply his own principles to life, and act as if either he had no existence at all, or were merely a portion of rude matter,—he will soon lay aside his scornful indifference, and indignantly complain of thee; earnestly call thy attention to thy conduct towards him; maintain that thou oughtst not and darest not so to act; and thus prove to thee, by deeds, that thou art assuredly capable of acting upon him; that *he is,* and that *thou art,*—that there is a medium by which thou canst influence him, and that thou, at least, hast duties to perform towards him.

Thus, it is not the operation of supposed external objects, which indeed exist for us, and we for them, only in so far as we already know of them; and just as little an empty vision evoked by our own imagination and thought, the products of which must, like itself, be mere empty pictures;—it is not these, but the necessary faith in our own freedom and power, in our own real activity, and in the definite laws of human action, which lies at the root of all our consciousness of a reality external to ourselves;—a consciousness

which is itself but faith, since it is founded on another faith, of which however it is a necessary consequence. We are compelled to believe that we act, and that we ought to act in a certain manner; we are compelled to assume a certain sphere for this action; this sphere is the real, actually present world, such as we find it;—and on the other hand, the world is absolutely nothing more than, and cannot, in any way, extend itself beyond, this sphere. From this necessity of action proceeds the consciousness of the actual world; and not the reverse way, from the consciousness of the actual world the necessity of action:—this, not that, is the first; the former is derived from the latter. We do not act because we know, but we know because we are called upon to act:—the practical reason is the root of all reason. The laws of action for rational beings are *immediately certain;* their world is certain only through that previous certainty. We cannot deny these laws without plunging the world, and ourselves with it, into absolute annihilation;—we raise ourselves from this abyss, and maintain ourselves above it, solely by our moral activity.

II.

There is something which I am called upon to do, simply in order that it may be done; something to avoid doing, solely that it may be left undone. But can I act without having an end in view beyond the action itself, without directing my intention towards something which can become possible by means of my action, and only by means of it? Can I will, without having something which I will? No:—this would be

contradictory to the very nature of my mind. To every action there is united in my thought, immediately and by the laws of thought itself, a condition of things placed in futurity, to which my action is related as the efficient cause to the effect produced. But this purpose or end of my action must not be proposed to me for its own sake,—perhaps through some necessity of Nature,—and then my course of action determined according to this end; I must not have an end assigned to me, and then inquire how I must act in order to attain this end; my action must not be dependent on the end; but I must act in a certain manner, simply because I ought so to act;—this is the first point. That a result will follow from this course of action, is proclaimed by the voice within me. This result necessarily becomes an end to me, since I am bound to perform the action which brings it, and it alone, to pass. I will that something shall come to pass, because I must act so that it may come to pass;—just as I do not hunger because food is before me but a thing becomes food for me because I hunger, so I do not act as I do because a certain end is to be attained, but the end becomes an end to me because I am bound to act in the manner by which it may be attained. I have not first in view the point towards which I am to draw my line, and then, by its position, determine the direction of my line and the angle it shall make; but I draw my line absolutely in a right angle, and thereby the points are determined through which my line must pass. The end does not determine the commandment; but, on the contrary, the immediate purport of the commandment determines the end.

I say, it is the law which commands me to act that

of itself assigns an end to my action; the same inward power that compels me to think that I ought to act thus, compels me also to believe that from my action some result will arise; it opens to my spiritual vision a prospect into another world,—which is really a world, a state, namely, and not an action,—but another and better world than that which is present to the physical eye; it constrains me to aspire after this better world, to embrace it with every power, to long for its realization, to live only in it, and in it alone find satisfaction. The law itself is my guarantee for the certain attainment of this end. The same resolution by which I devote my whole thought and life to the fulfilment of this law, and determine to see nothing beyond it, brings with it the indestructible conviction that the promise it implies is likewise true and certain, and renders it impossible for me even to conceive the possibility of the opposite. As I live in obedience to it, so do I live also in the contemplation of its end,—in that better world which it promises to me.

Even in the mere consideration of the world as it is, apart from this law, there arises within me the wish, the desire,—no, not the mere desire, but the absolute demand for a better world. I cast a glance on the present relations of men towards each other and towards Nature; on the feebleness of their powers, the strength of their desires and passions. A voice within me proclaims with irresistible conviction—"It is impossible that it can remain thus; it must become different and better."

I cannot think of the present state of humanity as that in which it is destined to remain; I am absolutely

unable to conceive of this as its complete and final vocation. Then, indeed, were all a dream and a delusion; and it would not be worth the trouble to have lived, and played out this ever-repeated game, which tends to nothing and signifies nothing. Only in so far as I can regard this state as the means towards a better, as the transition point to a higher and more perfect state, has it any value in my eyes;—not for its own sake, but for the sake of that better world for which it prepares the way, can I support it, esteem it, and joyfully perform my part in it. My mind can accept no place in the present, nor rest in it even for a moment; my whole being flows onward, incessantly and irresistibly, towards that future and better state of things.

Shall I eat and drink only that I may hunger and thirst and eat and drink again, till the grave which is open beneath my feet shall swallow me up and I myself become the food of worms? Shall I beget beings like myself, that they too may eat and drink and die, and leave behind them beings like themselves to do the same that I have done? To what purpose this ever-revolving circle, this ceaseless and unvarying round, in which all things appear only to pass away, and pass away only that they may re-appear as they were before;—this monster continually devouring itself that it may again bring itself forth, and bringing itself forth only that it may again devour itself?

This can never be the vocation of my being, and of all being. There must be something which is because it has come into existence; and endures, and cannot come anew, having once become such as it is. And this abiding existence must be produced amid the vicissitudes of the transitory and perishable, maintain

itself there, and be borne onwards, pure and inviolate, upon the waves of time.

Our race still laboriously extorts the means of its subsistence and preservation from an opposing Nature. The larger portion of mankind is still condemned through life to severe toil, in order to supply nourishment for itself and for the smaller portion which thinks for it;—immortal spirits are compelled to fix their whole thoughts and endeavours on the earth that brings forth their food. It still frequently happens that, when the labourer has finished his toil and has promised himself in return a lasting endurance both for himself and for his work, a hostile element will destroy in a moment that which it has cost him years of patient industry and deliberation to accomplish, and the assiduous and careful man is undeservedly made the prey of hunger and misery;—often do floods, storms, volcanoes, desolate whole countries, and works which bear the impress of a rational soul are mingled with their authors in the wild chaos of death and destruction. Disease sweeps into an untimely grave men in the pride of their strength, and children whose existence has as yet borne no fruit; pestilence stalks through blooming lands, leaves the few who escape its ravages like lonely orphans bereaved of the accustomed support of their fellows, and does all that it can do to give back to the desert regions which the labour of man has won from thence as a possession to himself. Thus it is now, but thus it cannot remain for ever. No work that bears the stamp of Reason, and has been undertaken to extend her power, can ever be wholly lost in the onward progress of the ages. The sacrifices which the irregular violence of Nature extorts from Reason, must at least exhaust, disarm, and appease

that violence. The same power which has burst out into lawless fury, cannot again commit like excesses; it cannot be destined to renew its strength; through its own outbreak its energies must henceforth and for ever be exhausted. All those outbreaks of unregulated power before which human strength vanishes into nothing, those desolating hurricanes, those earthquakes, those volcanoes, can be nothing else than the last struggles of the rude mass against the law of regular, progressive, living, and systematic activity to which it is compelled to submit in opposition to its own undirected impulses;—nothing but the last shivering strokes by which the perfect formation of our globe has yet to be accomplished. That resistance must gradually become weaker and at length be exhausted, since, in the regulated progress of things, there can be nothing to renew its strength; that formation must at length be achieved, and our destined dwelling-place be made complete. Nature must gradually be resolved into a condition in which her regular action may be calculated and safely relied upon, and her power bear a fixed and definite relation to that which is destined to govern it,—that of man. In so far as this relation already exists, and the cultivation of Nature has attained a firm footing, the works of man, by their mere existence, and by an influence altogether beyond the original intent of their authors, shall again react upon Nature, and become to her a new vivifying principle. Cultivation shall quicken and ameliorate the sluggish and baleful atmosphere of primeval forests, deserts, and marshes; more regular and varied cultivation shall diffuse throughout the air new impulses to life and fertility; and the sun shall pour his most animating rays into an atmosphere breathed by healthful, indus-

trious, and civilized nations. Science, first called into existence by the pressure of necessity, shall afterwards calmly and carefully investigate the unchangeable laws of Nature, review its powers at large, and learn to calculate their possible manifestations; and while closely following the footsteps of Nature in the living and actual world, form for itself in thought a new ideal one. Every discovery which Reason has extorted from Nature shall be maintained throughout the ages, and become the ground of new knowledge, for the common possession of our race. Thus shall Nature ever become more and more intelligible and transparent even in her most secret depths; human power, enlightened and armed by human invention, shall rule over her without difficulty, and the conquest, once made, shall be peacefully maintained. This dominion of man over Nature shall gradually be extended, until, at length, no farther expenditure of mechanical labour shall be necessary than what the human body requires for its development, cultivation, and health; and this labour shall cease to be a burden;—for a reasonable being is not destined to be a bearer of burdens.

But it is not Nature, it is Freedom itself, by which the greatest and most terrible disorders incident to our race are produced; man is the cruelest enemy of man. Lawless hordes of savages still wander over vast wildernesses;—they meet, and the victor devours his foe at the triumphal feast:—or where culture has at length united these wild hordes under some social bond, they attack each other, as nations, with the power which law and union have given them. Defying toil and privation, their armies traverse peaceful plains and forests;—they meet each other, and the sight of their

brethren is the signal for slaughter. Equipt with the mightiest inventions of the human intellect, hostile fleets plough their way through the ocean; through storm and tempest man rushes to meet his fellow men upon the lonely inhospitable sea;—they meet, and defy the fury of the elements that they may destroy each other with their own hands. Even in the interior of states, where men seem to be united in equality under the law, it is still for the most part only force and fraud which rule under that venerable name; and here the warfare is so much the more shameful that it is not openly declared to be war, and the party attacked is even deprived of the privilege of defending himself against unjust oppression. Combinations of the few rejoice aloud in the ignorance, the folly, the vice, and the misery in which the greater number of their fellow-men are sunk, avowedly seek to retain them in this state of degradation, and even to plunge them deeper in it in order to perpetuate their slavery;—nay, would destroy any one who should venture to enlighten or improve them. No attempt at amelioration can anywhere be made without rousing up from slumber a host of selfish interests to war against it, and uniting even the most varied and opposite in a common hostility. The good cause is ever the weaker, for it is simple, and can be loved only for itself; the bad attracts each individual by the promise which is most seductive to him; and its adherents, always at war among themselves, so soon as the good makes its appearance, conclude a truce that they may unite the whole powers of their wickedness against it. Scarcely, indeed, is such an opposition needed, for even the good themselves are but too often divided by misunderstanding, error, distrust, and secret self-love, and that so

much the more violently, the more earnestly each strives to propagate that which he recognizes as best; and thus internal discord dissipates a power, which, even when united, could scarcely hold the balance with evil. One blames the other for rushing onwards with stormy impetuosity to his object, without waiting until the good result shall have been prepared; whilst he in turn is blamed that, through hesitation and cowardice, he accomplishes nothing, but allows all things to remain as they are, contrary to his better conviction, because for him the hour of action never arrives:—and only the Omniscient can determine whether either of the parties in the dispute is in the right. Every one regards the undertaking, the necessity of which is most apparent to him, and in the prosecution of which he has acquired the greatest skill, as most important and needful,—as the point from which all improvement must proceed; he requires all good men to unite their efforts with his, and to subject themselves to him for the accomplishment of his particular purpose, holding it to be treason to the good cause if they hold back;—while they on the other hand make the same demands upon him, and accuse him of similar treason for a similar refusal. Thus do all good intentions among men appear to be lost in vain disputations, which leave behind them no trace of their existence: while in the meantime the world goes on as well, or as ill, as it can without human effort, by the blind mechanism of Nature,—and so will go on for ever.

And so go on for ever?—No;—not so, unless the whole existence of humanity is to be an idle game, without significance and without end. It cannot be

intended that those savage tribes should always remain savage; no race can be born with all the capacities of perfect humanity, and yet be destined never to develop these capacities, never to become more than that which a sagacious animal by its own proper nature might become. Those savages must be destined to be the progenitors of more powerful, cultivated, and virtuous generations;—otherwise it is impossible to conceive of a purpose in their existence, or even of the possibility of their existence in a world ordered and arranged by reason. Savage races may become civilized, for this has already occurred;—the most cultivated nations of modern times are the descendants of savages. Whether civilization is a direct and natural development of human society, or is invariably brought about through instruction and example from without, and the primary source of all human culture must be sought in a superhuman guidance,—by the same way in which nations which once were savage have emerged into civilization, will those who are yet uncivilized gradually attain it. They must, no doubt, at first pass through the same dangers and corruptions of a merely sensual civilization, by which the civilized nations are still oppressed, but they will thereby be brought into union with the great whole of humanity and be made capable of taking part in its further progress.

It is the vocation of our race to unite itself into one single body, all the parts of which shall be thoroughly known to each other, and all possessed of similar culture. Nature, and even the passions and vices of men, have from the beginning tended towards this end; a great part of the way towards it is already passed, and we may surely calculate that this end,

which is the condition of all farther social progress, will in time be attained! Let us not ask of history if man, on the whole, have yet become purely moral! To a more extended, comprehensive, energetic freedom he has certainly attained; but hitherto it has been an almost necessary result of his position, that this freedom has been applied chiefly to evil purposes. Neither let us ask whether the æsthetic and intellectual culture of the ancient world, concentrated on a few points, may not have excelled in degree that of modern times! It might happen that we should receive a humiliating answer, and that in this respect the human race has not advanced, but rather seemed to retrograde, in its riper years. But let us ask of history at what period the existing culture has been most widely diffused, and distributed among the greatest number of individuals; and we shall doubtless find that from the beginning of history down to our own day, the few light-points of civilization have spread themselves abroad from their centre, that one individual after another, and one nation after another, has been embraced within their circle, and that this wider outspread of culture is proceeding under our own eyes. And this is the first point to be attained in the endless path on which humanity must advance. Until this shall have been attained, until the existing culture of every age shall have been diffused over the whole inhabited globe, and our race becomes capable of the most unlimited inter-communication with itself, one nation or one continent must pause on the great common path of progress, and wait for the advance of the others; and each must bring as an offering to the universal commonwealth, for the sake of which alone it exists, its ages of apparent immobility or

retrogression. When that first point shall have been attained, when every useful discovery made at one end of the earth shall be at once made known and communicated to all the rest, then, without farther interruption, without halt or regress, with united strength and equal step, humanity shall move onward to a higher culture, of which we can at present form no conception.

Within those singular associations, thrown together by unreasoning accident, which we call States,—after they have subsisted for a time in peace, when the resistance excited by yet new oppression has been lulled to sleep, and the fermentation of contending forces appeased,—abuse, by its continuance, and by general sufferance, assumes a sort of established form; and the ruling classes, in the uncontested enjoyment of their extorted privileges, have nothing more to do but to extend them further, and to give to this extension also the same established form. Urged by their insatiable desires, they will continue from generation to generation their efforts to acquire wider and yet wider privileges, and never say "It is enough!" until at last oppression shall reach its limit, and become wholly insupportable, and despair give back to the oppressed that power which their courage, extinguished by centuries of tyranny, could not procure for them. They will then no longer endure any among them who cannot be satisfied to be on an equality with others, and so to remain. In order to protect themselves against internal violence or new oppression, all will take on themselves the same obligations. Their deliberations, in which every man shall decide, whatever he decides, for himself, and not for one subject to him whose sufferings will never affect

him, and in whose fate he takes no concern;—deliberations, according to which no one can hope that it shall be he who is to *practise* a permitted injustice, but every one must fear that he may have to *suffer* it;—deliberations that alone deserve the name of legislation, which is something wholly different from the ordinances of combined lords to the countless herds of their slaves;—these deliberations will necessarily be guided by justice, and will lay the foundation of a true State, in which each individual, from a regard for his own security, will be irresistibly compelled to respect the security of every other without exception; since, under the supposed legislation, every injury which he should attempt to do to another, would not fall upon its object, but would infallibly recoil upon himself.

By the establishment of this only true State, this firm foundation of internal peace, the possibility of foreign war, at least with other *true* States, is cut off. Even for its own advantage, even to prevent the thought of injustice, plunder and violence entering the minds of its own citizens, and to leave them no possibility of gain, except by means of industry and diligence within their legitimate sphere of activity, every true state must forbid as strictly, prevent as carefully, compensate as exactly, or punish as severely, any injury to the citizen of a neighbouring state, as to one of its own. The law concerning the security of neighbours is necessarily a law in every state that is not a robber-state; and by its operation the possibility of any just complaint of one state against another, and consequently every case of self-defence among nations, is entirely prevented. There are no necessary, permanent, and immediate relations

of states, as such, with each other, which should be productive of strife; there are, properly speaking, only relations of the individual citizens of one state to the individual citizens of another; a state can be injured only in the person of one of its citizens; but such injury will be immediately compensated and the aggrieved state satisfied. Between such states as these, there is no rank which can be insulted, no ambition which can be offended. No officer of one state is authorised to intermeddle in the internal affairs of another, nor is there any temptation for him to do so, since he could not derive the slightest personal advantage from any such influence. That a whole nation should determine, for the sake of plunder, to make war on a neighbouring country, is impossible; for in a state where all are equal, the plunder could not become the booty of a few, but must be equally divided amongst all, and the share of no one individual could ever recompense him for the trouble of the war. Only where the advantage falls to the few oppressors, and the injury, the toil, the expense, to the countless herd of slaves, is a war of spoliation possible and conceivable. Not from states like themselves could such states as these entertain any fear of war; only from savages, or barbarians whose lack of skill to enrich themselves by industry impels them to plunder; or from enslaved nations, driven by their masters to a war from which they themselves will reap no advantage. In the former case, each individual civilized state must already be the stronger through the arts of civilization; against the latter danger, the common advantage of all demands that they should strengthen themselves by union. No free state can reasonably suffer in its vicinity associations

governed by rulers whose interests would be promoted by the subjugation of adjacent nations, and whose very existence is therefore a constant source of danger to their neighbours; a regard for their own security compels all free states to transform all around them into free states like themselves; and thus, for the sake of their own welfare, to extend the empire of culture over barbarism, of freedom over slavery. Soon will the nations, civilized or enfranchised by them, find themselves placed in the same relation towards others still enthralled by barbarism or slavery, in which the earlier free nations previously stood towards them, and be compelled to do the same things for these which were previously done for themselves; and thus, of necessity, by reason of the existence of some few really free states, will the empire of civilization, freedom, and with it universal peace, gradually embrace the whole world.

Thus, from the establishment of a just internal organization, and of peace between individuals, there will necessarily result integrity in the external relations of nations towards each other, and universal peace among them. But the establishment of this just internal organization, and the emancipation of the first nation that shall be truly free, arises as a necessary consequence from the ever-growing oppression exercised by the ruling classes towards their subjects, which gradually becomes insupportable,—a progress which may be safely left to the passions and the blindness of those classes, even although warned of the result.

In these only true states all temptation to evil, nay, even the possibility of a man resolving upon a bad action with any reasonable hope of benefit to himself,

will be entirely taken away; and the strongest possible motives will be offered to every man to make virtue the sole object of his will.

There is no man who loves evil because it is evil; it is only the advantages and enjoyments expected from it, and which, in the present condition of humanity, do actually, in most cases, result from it, that are loved. So long as this condition shall continue, so long as a premium shall be set upon vice, a fundamental improvement of mankind, as a whole, can scarcely be hoped for. But in a civil society constituted as it ought to be, as reason requires it to be, as the thinker may easily describe it to himself although he may nowhere find it actually existing at the present day, and as it must necessarily exist in the first nation that shall really acquire true freedom,—in such a state of society, evil will present no advantages, but rather the most certain disadvantages, and self-love itself will restrain the excess of self-love when it would run out into injustice. By the unerring administration of such a state, every fraud or oppression practised upon others, all self-aggrandizement at their expense, will be rendered not merely vain, and all labour so applied fruitless, but such attempts would even recoil upon their author, and assuredly bring home to himself the evil which he would cause to others. In his own land,—out of his own land,—throughout the whole world, he could find no one whom he might injure and yet go unpunished. But it is not to be expected, even of a bad man, that he would determine upon evil merely for the sake of such a resolution, although he had no power to carry it into effect, and nothing could arise from it but infamy to himself. The use of liberty for evil purposes is thus destroyed; man

must resolve either to renounce his freedom altogether, and patiently to become a mere passive wheel in the great machine of the universe, or else to employ it for good. In soil thus prepared, good will easily prosper. When men shall no longer be divided by selfish purposes, nor their powers exhausted in struggles with each other, nothing will remain for them but to direct their united strength against the one common enemy which still remains unsubdued,—resisting, uncultivated nature. No longer estranged from each other by private ends, they will necessarily combine for this common object; and thus there arises a body, everywhere animated by the same spirit and the same love. Every misfortune to the individual, since it can no longer be a gain to any other individual, is a misfortune to the whole, and to each individual member of the whole; and is felt with the same pain, and remedied with the same activity, by every member;—every step in advance made by one man is a step in advance made by the whole race. Here, where the petty, narrow self of mere individual personality is merged in the more comprehensive unity of the social constitution, each man truly loves every other as himself,—as a member of this greater *self* which now claims all his love, and of which he himself is no more than a member, capable of participating only in a common gain or in a common loss. The strife of evil against good is here abolished, for here no evil can intrude. The strife of the good among themselves for the sake of good, disappears, now that they find it easy to love good for its own sake alone and not because they are its authors; now that it has become of all-importance to them that the truth should really be discovered, that the useful action should be

done,—but not at all by whom this may be accomplished. Here each individual is at all times ready to join his strength to that of others, to make it subordinate to that of others; and whoever, according to the judgment of all, is most capable of accomplishing the greatest amount of good, will be supported by all, and his success rejoiced in by all with an equal joy.

This is the purpose of our earthly life, which reason sets before us, and for the infallible attainment of which she is our pledge and security. This is not an object given to us only that we may strive after it for the mere purpose of exercising our powers on something great, the real existence of which we may perhaps be compelled to abandon to doubt;—it shall, it must be realized; there must be a time in which it shall be accomplished, as surely as there is a sensible world and a race of reasonable beings existent in time with respect to which nothing earnest and rational is conceivable besides this purpose, and whose existence becomes intelligible only through this purpose. Unless all human life be metamorphosed into a mere theatrical display for the gratification of some malignant spirit, who has implanted in poor humanity this inextinguishable longing for the imperishable only to amuse himself with its ceaseless pursuit of that which it can never overtake,—its ever-repeated efforts, Ixion-like, to embrace that which still eludes its grasp,—its restless hurrying onward in an ever-recurring circle,—only to mock its earnest aspirations with an empty, insipid farce;—unless the wise man, seeing through this mockery, and feeling an irrepressible disgust at

continuing to play his part in it, is to cast life indignantly from him and make the moment of his awakening to reason also that of his physical death;—unless these things are so this purpose most assuredly must be attained.—Yes! it is attainable *in life,* and *through life,* for Reason commands me to live:—it is attainable, for I am.

III.

But when this end shall have been attained, and humanity shall at length stand at this point, what is there then to do? Upon earth there is no higher state than this;—the generation which has once reached it, can no more than abide there, steadfastly maintain its position, die, and leave behind it descendants who shall do the like, and who will again leave behind them descendants to follow in their footsteps. Humanity would thus stand still upon her path; and therefore her earthly end cannot be her highest end. This earthly end is conceivable, attainable, and finite. Even although we consider all preceding generations as means for the production of the last complete one, we do not thereby escape the question of earnest reason,—to what end then is this last one? Since a Human Race has appeared upon earth, its existence there must certainly be in accordance with, and not contrary to, reason; and it must attain all the development which it is possible for it to attain on earth. But why should such a race have an existence at all,—why may it not as well have remained in the womb of chaos? Reason it not for the sake of existence, but existence for the sake of reason. An existence

which does not of itself satisfy reason and solve all her questions, cannot by possibility be the true being.

And, then, are those actions which are commanded by the voice of conscience,—by that voice whose dictates I never dare to criticise, but must always obey in silence,—are those actions, in reality, always the means, and the only means, for the attainment of the earthly purpose of humanity? That I cannot do otherwise than refer them to this purpose, and dare not have any other object in view to be attained by means of them, is incontestible. But then are these, my intentions, always fulfilled?—is it enough that we will what is good, in order that it may happen? Alas! many virtuous intentions are entirely lost for this world, and others appear even to hinder the purpose which they were designed to promote. On the other hand, the most despicable passions of men, their vices and their crimes, often forward, more certainly, the good cause than the endeavours of the virtuous man, who will never do evil that good may come! It seems that the Highest Good of the world pursues its course of increase and prosperity quite independently of all human virtues or vices, according to its own laws, through an invisible and unknown Power,—just as the heavenly bodies run their appointed course, independently of all human effort; and that this Power carries forward, in its own great plan, all human intentions, good and bad, and with overruling wisdom, employs for its own purpose that which was undertaken for other ends.

Thus, even if the attainment of this earthly end could be the purpose of our existence, and every doubt which reason could start with regard to it were silenced, yet would this end not be ours, but the end

of that unknown power. We do not know, even for a moment, what is conducive to this end; and nothing is left to us but to give by our actions some material, no matter what, for this power to work upon, and to leave to it the task of elaborating this material to its own purposes. It would, in that case, be our highest wisdom not to trouble ourselves about matters that do not concern us; to live according to our own fancy or inclinations, and quietly leave the consequences to that unknown power. The moral law within us would be void and superfluous, and absolutely unfitted to a being destined to nothing higher than this. In order to be at one with ourselves, we should have to refuse obedience to that law, and to suppress it as a perverse and foolish fanaticism.

No!—I will not refuse obedience to the law of duty; as surely as I live and am, I will obey, absolutely because it commands. This resolution shall be first and highest in my mind; that by which everything else is determined, but which is itself determined by nothing else;—this shall be the innermost principle of my spiritual life.

But, as a reasonable being, before whom a purpose must be set solely by its own will and determination, it is impossible for me to act without a motive and without an end. If this obedience is to be recognised by me as a reasonable service,—if the voice which demands this obedience be really that of the creative reason within me, and not a mere fanciful enthusiasm, invented by my own imagination, or communicated to me somehow from without,—this obedience must have some consequences, must serve some end. It is evi-

dent that it does not serve the purpose of the world of sense;—there must, therefore, be a super-sensual world, whose purposes it does promote.

The mist of delusion clears away from before my sight! I receive a new organ, and a new world opens before me. It is disclosed to me only by the law of reason, and answers only to that law in my spirit. I apprehend this world,—limited as I am by my sensuous view, I must thus name the unnameable—I apprehend this world merely in and through the end which is promised to my obedience;—it is in reality nothing else than this necessary end itself which reason annexes to the law of duty.

Setting aside everything else, how could I suppose that this law had reference to the world of sense, or that the whole end and object of the obedience which it demands is to be found within that world, since that which alone is of importance in this obedience serves no purpose whatever in that world, can never become a cause in it, and can never produce results. In the world of sense, which proceeds on a chain of material causes and effects, and in which whatever happens depends merely on that which preceded it, it is never of any moment *how, and with what motives and intentions,* an action is performed, but only *what the action is.*

Had it been the whole purpose of our existence to produce an earthly condition of our race, there would have been required only an unerring mechanism by which our outward actions might have been determined,—we would not have needed to be more than wheels well fitted to the great machine. Freedom

would have been, not merely vain, but even obstructive; a virtuous will wholly superfluous. The world would, in that case, be most unskilfully directed, and attain the purposes of its existence by wasteful extravagance and circuitous byways. Hadst thou, mighty World-Spirit! withheld from us this freedom, which thou art now constrained to adapt to thy plans with labour and contrivance; hadst thou rather at once compelled us to act in the way in which thy plans required that we should act, thou wouldst have attained thy purposes by a much shorter way, as the humblest of the dwellers in these thy worlds can tell thee. But I am free; and therefore such a chain of causes and effects, in which freedom is absolutely superfluous and without aim, cannot exhaust my whole nature. I must be free; for it is not the mere mechanical act, but the free determination of free will, for the sake of duty and for the ends of duty only,—thus speaks the voice of conscience within us,—this alone it is which constitutes our true worth. The bond with which this law of duty binds me is a bond for living spirits only; it disdains to rule over a dead mechanism, and addresses its decrees only to the living and the free. It requires of me this obedience;—this obedience therefore cannot be nugatory or superfluous.

And now the Eternal World rises before me more brightly, and the fundamental law of its order stands clearly and distinctly apparent to my mental vision. In this world, *will* alone, as it lies concealed from mortal eye in the secret obscurities of the soul, is the first link in a chain of consequences that stretches through the whole invisible realms of spirit; as, in

the physical world, *action*—a certain movement of matter—is the first link in a material chain that runs through the whole system of nature. The will is the efficient, living principle of the world of reason, as motion is the efficient, living principle of the world of sense. I stand in the centre of two entirely opposite worlds:—a visible world, in which action is the only moving power; and an invisible and absolutely incomprehensible world, in which will is the ruling principle. I am one of the primitive forces of both these worlds. My will embraces both. This will is, in itself, a constituent element of the super-sensual world; for as I move it by my successive resolutions, I move and change something in that world, and my activity thus extends itself throughout the whole, and gives birth to new and ever-enduring results which henceforward possess a real existence and need not again to be produced. This will may break forth in a material act,—and this act belongs to the world of sense and does there that which pertains to a material act to do.

It is not necessary that I should first be severed from the terrestrial world before I can obtain admission into the celestial one;—I am and live in it even now, far more truly than in the terrestrial; even now it is my only sure foundation, and the eternal life on the possession of which I have already entered is the only ground why I should still prolong this earthly one. That which we call heaven does not lie beyond the grave; it is even here diffused around us, and its light arises in every pure heart. My will is mine, and it is the only thing that is wholly mine and entirely dependent on myself; and through it I have already become a citizen of the realm of freedom and of pure

spiritual activity. What determination of my will—of the only thing by which I am raised from earth into this region—is best adapted to the order of the spiritual world, is proclaimed to me at every moment by my conscience, the bond that constantly unites me to it;—and it depends solely on myself to give my activity the appointed direction. Thus I cultivate myself for this world; labour in it, and for it, in cultivating one of its members; in it, and only in it, pursue my purpose according to a settled plan, without doubt or hesitation, certain of the result, since here no foreign power stands opposed to my free will. That, in the world of sense, my will also becomes an action, is but the law of this sensuous world. I did not send forth the act as I did the will; only the latter was wholly and purely my work,—it was all that proceeded forth from me. It was not even necessary that there should be another particular act on my part to unite the deed to the will; the deed unites itself to it according to the law of that second world with which I am connected through my will, and in which this will is likewise an original force, as it is in the first. I am indeed compelled, when I regard my will, determined according to the dictates of conscience, as a fact and an efficient cause in the world of sense, to refer it to that earthly purpose of humanity as a means to the accomplishment of an end;—not as if I should first survey the plan of the world and from this knowledge calculate what I had to do; but the specific action, which conscience directly enjoins me to do, reveals itself to me at once as the only means by which, in my position, I can contribute to the attainment of that end. Even if it should afterwards appear as if this end had not been promoted—nay, if

it should even seem to have been hindered—by my action, yet I can never regret it, nor perplex myself about it, so surely as I have truly obeyed my conscience in performing this act. Whatever consequences it may have in this world, in the other world there can nothing but good result from it. And even in this world, should my action appear to have failed of its purpose, my conscience *for that very reason* commands me to repeat it in a manner that may more effectually reach its end; or, should it seem to have hindered that purpose, *for that very reason* to make good the detriment and annihilate the untoward result. I will as I ought, and the new deed follows. It may happen that the consequences of this new action, in the world of sense, may appear to me not more beneficial than those of the first; but, with respect to the other world, I retain the same calm assurance as before; and, in the present, it is again my bounden duty to make good my previous failure by new action. And thus, should it still appear that, during my whole earthly life, I have not advanced the good cause a single hair's-breadth in this world, yet I dare not cease my efforts: after every unsuccessful attempt, I must still believe that the next will be successful. But in the spiritual world no step is ever lost. In short, I do not pursue the earthly purpose for its own sake alone, or as a final aim; but only because my true final aim, obedience to the law of conscience, does not present itself to me in this world in any other shape than as the advancement of this end. I may not cease to pursue it, unless I were to deny the law of duty, or unless that law were to manifest itself to me, in this life, in some other shape than as a commandment to promote this purpose in my

own place;—I shall actually cease to pursue it in another life in which that commandment shall have set before me some other purpose wholly incomprehensible to me here. In this life, I must *will* to promote it, because I must obey; whether it be *actually* promoted by the deed that follows my will thus fittingly directed is not my care; I am responsible only for the will, but not for the result. Previous to the actual deed, I can never resign this purpose; the deed, when it is completed, I may resign, and repeat it, or improve it. Thus do I live and labour, even here, in my most essential nature and in my nearest purposes, only for the other world, and my activity for it is the only thing of which I am completely certain;—in the world of sense I labour only for the sake of the other, and only because I cannot work for the other without at least *willing* to work for it.

I will establish myself firmly in this, to me, wholly new view of my vocation. The present life cannot be rationally regarded as the whole purpose of my existence, or of the existence of a human race in general;—there is something in me, and there is something required of me, which finds in this life nothing to which it can be applied, and which is entirely superfluous and unnecessary for the attainment of the highest objects that can be attained on earth. There must therefore be a purpose in human existence which lies beyond this life. But should the present life, which is nevertheless imposed upon us, and which cannot be designed solely for the development of reason, since even awakened reason commands us to maintain it and to promote its highest purposes with all

our powers,—should this life not prove entirely vain and ineffectual, it must at least have relation to a future life, as means to an end. Now there is nothing in this present life, the ultimate consequences of which do not remain on earth,—nothing whereby we could be connected with a future life—but only our virtuous will, which in this world, but the fundamental laws thereof, is entirely fruitless. Only our virtuous will can it, must it be, by which we can labour for another life, and for the first and nearest objects which are there revealed to us; and it is the consequences, invisible to us, of this virtuous will, through which we first acquire a firm standing-point in that life from whence we may then advance in a farther course of progress.

That our virtuous will in, and for and through itself, must have consequences, we know already in this life, for reason cannot command anything which is without a purpose; but what these consequences may be,—nay, how it is even possible for a mere will to produce any effect at all,—as to this we can form no conception whatever, so long as we are still confined to this material world; and it is true wisdom not to undertake an inquiry in which we know beforehand that we shall be unsuccessful. With respect to the nature of these consequences, the present life is therefore, in relation to the future, *a life in faith.* In the future life, we shall possess these consequences, for we shall then proceed from them as our starting-point, and build upon them as our foundation; and this other life will thus be, in relation to the consequences of our virtuous will in the present, *a life in sight.* In that other life, we shall also have an im-

mediate purpose set before us, as we have in the present; for our activity must not cease. But we remain finite beings,—and for finite beings there is but finite, determinate activity; and every determinate act has a determinate end. As, in the present life; the actually existing world as we find it around us, the fitting adjustment of this world to the work we have to do in it, the degree of culture and virtue already attained by men, and our own physical powers,—as these stand related to the purposes of this life,—so, in the future life, the consequences of our virtuous will in the present shall stand related to the purposes of that other existence. The present is the commencement of our existence; the endowments requisite for its purpose, and a firm footing in it, have been freely bestowed on us:—the future is the continuation of this existence, and in it we must acquire for ourselves a commencement, and a definite standing-point.

And now the present life no longer appears vain and useless; for this and this alone it is given to us—that we may acquire for ourselves a firm foundation in the future life, and only by means of this foundation is it connected with our whole external existence. It is very possible, that the immediate purpose of this second life may prove as unattainable by finite powers, with certainty and after a fixed plan, as the purpose of the present life is now, and that even there a virtuous will may appear superfluous and without result. But it can never be lost there, any more than here, for it is the eternal and unalterable command of reason. Its necessary efficacy would, in that case, direct us to a third life, in which the consequences of our virtuous will in the second life will become visible;—a life which during the second life would again

be believed in through faith, but with firmer, more unwavering confidence, since we should already have had practical experience of the truthfulness of reason, and have regained the fruits of a pure heart which had been faithfully garnered up in a previously completed life.

As in the present life it is only from the command of conscience to follow a certain course of action that there arises our conception of a certain purpose in this action, and from this our whole intuitive perception of a world of sense;—so in the future, upon a similar, but now to us wholly inconceivable command, will be founded our conception of the immediate purpose of that life; and upon this, again, our intuitive perception of a world in which we shall set out from the consequences of our virtuous will in the present life. The present world exists for us only through the law of duty; the other will be revealed to us, in a similar manner, through another command of duty; for in no other manner can a world exist for any reasonable being.

This, then, is my whole sublime vocation, my true nature. I am a member of two orders:—the one purely spiritual, in which I rule by my will alone; the other sensuous, in which I operate by my deed. The whole end of reason is pure activity, absolutely by itself alone, having no need of any instrument out of itself,—independence of everything which is not reason,—absolute freedom. The will is the living principle of reason,—is itself reason, when purely and simply apprehended; that reason is active by itself alone, means, that pure will, merely as such, lives and

rules. It is only the Infinite Reason that lives immediately and wholly in this purely spiritual order. The finite reason,—which does not of itself constitute the world of reason, but is only one of its many members,—lives necessarily at the same time in a sensuous order; that is to say, in one which presents to it another object, beyond a purely spiritual activity:—a material object, to be promoted by instruments and powers which indeed stand under the immediate dominion of the will, but whose activity is also conditioned by their own natural laws. Yet as surely as reason is reason, must the will operate absolutely by itself, and independently of the natural laws by which the material action is determined;—and hence the sensuous life of every finite being points towards a higher, into which the will, by itself alone, may open the way, and of which it may acquire possession,—a possession which indeed we must again sensuously conceive of as a state, and not as a mere will.

These two orders,—the purely spiritual and the sensuous, the latter consisting possibly of an innumerable series of particular lives,—have existed since the first moment of the development of an active reason within me, and still proceed parallel to each other. The latter order is only a phenomenon for myself, and for those with whom I am associated in this life; the former alone gives it significance, purpose, and value. I *am* immortal, imperishable, eternal, as soon as I form the resolution to obey the laws of reason; I do not need to *become* so. The supersensual world is no future world; it is now present; it can at no point of finite existence be more present than at another; not more present after an existence of myriads of lives than at this moment. My sensuous

existence may, in future, assume other forms, but these are just as little the true life, as its present form. By that resolution I lay hold on eternity, and cast off this earthly life and all other forms of sensuous life which may yet lie before me in futurity, and place myself far above them. I become the sole source of my own being and its phenomena, and, henceforth, unconditioned by anything without me, I have life in myself. My will, which is directed by no foreign agency in the order of the super-sensual world, but by myself alone, is this source of true life, and of eternity.

It is my will alone which is this source of true life, and of eternity;—only by recognising this will as the peculiar seat of moral goodness, and by actually raising it thereto, do I obtain the assurance and the possession of that super-sensual world.

Without regard to any conceivable or visible object, without inquiry as to whether my will may be followed by any result other than the mere volition,—I must will in accordance with the moral law. My will stands alone, apart from all that is not itself, and is its own world merely by itself and for itself; not only as being itself an absolutely *first,* primary and original power, before which there is no preceding influence by which it may be governed, but also as being followed by no conceivable or comprehensible *second* step in the series, coming after it, by which its activity may be brought under the dominion of a foreign law. Did there proceed from it any second, and from this again a third result, and so forth, in any conceivable sensuous world opposed to the spiritual world, then would its strength be broken by the resistance it would encounter from the independent ele-

ments of such a world which it would set in motion; the mode of its activity would no longer exactly correspond to the purpose expressed in the volition; and the will would no longer remain free, but be partly limited by the peculiar laws of its heterogeneous sphere of action. And thus must I actually regard the will in the present sensuous world, the only one known to me. I am indeed compelled to believe, and consequently to act as if I thought, that by my mere volition, my tongue, my hand, or my foot, might be set in motion; but how a mere aspiration, an impress of intelligence upon itself, such as will is, can be the principle of motion to a heavy material mass,—this I not only find it impossible to conceive, but the mere assertion is, before the tribunal of the understanding, a palpable absurdity;—here the movement of matter even in myself can be explained only by the internal forces of matter itself.

Such a view of my will as I have taken, can, however, be attained only through an intimate conviction that it is not merely the highest active principle for this world,—which it certainly might be, without having freedom in itself, by the mere influence of the system of the universe, perchance, as we must conceive of a formative power in Nature,—but that it absolutely disregards all earthly objects, and generally all objects lying out of itself, and recognises itself, for its own sake, as its own ultimate end. But by such a view of my will I am at once directed to a super-sensual order of things, in which the will, by itself alone and without any instrument lying out of itself, becomes an efficient cause in a sphere which, like itself, is purely spiritual, and is thoroughly accessible to it. That moral volition is demanded of us

absolutely for its own sake alone,—a truth which I discover only as a fact in my inward consciousness, and to the knowledge of which I cannot attain in any other way:—this was the first step of my thought. That this demand is reasonable, and the source and standard of all else that is reasonable; that it is not modelled upon any other thing whatever, but that all other things must, on the contrary, model themselves upon it,—and be dependent upon it,—a conviction which also I cannot arrive at from without, but can attain only by inward experience, by means of the unhesitating and immovable assent which I freely accord to this demand:—this was the second step of my thought. And from these two terms I have attained to faith in a super-sensual Eternal World. If I abandon the former, the latter falls to the ground. If it were true,—as many say it is, assuming it without farther proof as self-evident and extolling it as the highest summit of human wisdom,—that all human virtue must have before it a certain definite external object, and that it must first be assured of the possibility of attaining this object, before it can act and before it can become virtue; that, consequently, reason by no means contains within itself the principle and the standard of its own activity, but must receive this standard from without, through contemplation of an external world;—if this were true, then might the ultimate end of our existence be accomplished here below; human nature might be completely developed and exhausted by our earthly vocation, and we should have no rational ground for raising our thoughts above the present life.

But every thinker who has anywhere acquired those first principles even historically, moved perhaps by a mere love of the new and unusual, and who is able to prosecute a correct course of reasoning from them, might speak and teach as I have now spoken to myself. He would then present us with the thoughts of some other being, not with his own; everything would float before him empty and without significance, because he would be without the sense whereby he might apprehend its reality. He is a blind man, who, upon certain true principles concerning colours which he has learned historically, has built a perfectly correct theory of colour, notwithstanding that there is in reality no colour existing for him;—he can tell how, under certain conditions, it *must be;* but to him it *is* not so, because he does not stand under these conditions. The faculty by which we lay hold on Eternal Life is to be attained only by actually renouncing the sensuous and its objects, and sacrificing them to that law which takes cognizance of our will only and not of our actions;—renouncing them with the firmest conviction that it is reasonable for us to do so,—nay, that it is the only thing reasonable for us. By this renunciation of the Earthly, does faith in the Eternal first arise in our soul, and is there enshrined apart, as the only support to which we can cling after we have given up all else,—as the only animating principle that can elevate our minds and inspire our lives. We must indeed, according to the figure of a sacred doctrine, first "die unto the world and be born again, before we can enter the kingdom of God."

I see—Oh I now see clearly before me the cause of my former indifference and blindness concerning spiritual things! Absorbed by mere earthly objects, lost in them with all our thoughts and efforts, moved and urged onward only by the notion of a result lying beyond ourselves,—by the desire of such a result and of our enjoyment therein,—insensible and dead to the pure impulse of reason, which gives a law to itself, and offers to our aspirations a purely spiritual end,—the immortal Psyche remains, with fettered pinions, fastened to the earth. Our philosophy becomes the history of our own heart and life; and according to what we ourselves are, do we conceive of man and his vocation. Never impelled by any other motive than the desire after what can be actually realized in this world, there is for us no true freedom,—no freedom which holds the ground of its determination absolutely and entirely within itself. Our freedom is, at best, that of the self-forming plant; not essentially higher in its nature, but only more artistical in its results; not producing a mere material form with roots, leaves, and blossoms, but a mind with impulses, thoughts, and actions. We cannot have the slighest conception of true freedom, because we do not ourselves possess it; when it is spoken of, we either bring down what is said to the level of our own notions, or at once declare all such talk to be nonsense. Without the idea of freedom, we are likewise without the faculty for another world. Everything of this kind floats past before us like words that are not addressed to us; like a pale shadow, without colour or meaning, which we know not how to lay hold of or retain. We leave it as we find it, without the least participation or sympathy. Or should we ever be urged by a more

active zeal to consider it seriously, we then convince ourselves to our own satisfaction that all such ideas are untenable and worthless reveries, which the man of sound understanding unhesitatingly rejects; and according to the premises from which we proceed, made up as they are of our inward experiences, we are perfectly in the right, and secure from either refutation or conversion so long as we remain what we are. The excellent doctrines which are taught amongst us with a special authority, concerning freedom, duty, and everlasting life, become to us romantic fables, like those of Tartarus and the Elysian fields; although we do not publish to the world this our secret opinion, because we find it expedient, by means of these figures, to maintain an outward decorum among the populace; or, should we be less reflective, and ourselves bound in the chains of authority, then we sink to the level of the common mind, and believing what, *thus understood,* would be mere foolish fables, we find in those pure spiritual symbols only the promise of continuing throughout eternity the same miserable existence which we possess here below.

In one word:—only by the fundamental improvement of my will does a new light arise within me concerning my existence and vocation; without this, however much I may speculate, and with what rare intellectual gifts soever I may be endowed, darkness remains within me and around me. The improvement of the heart alone leads to true wisdom. Let then my whole life be unceasingly devoted to this one purpose.

IV.

My Moral Will merely as such, in and through itself, shall certainly and invariably produce consequences; every determination of my will in accordance with duty, although no action should follow it, shall operate in another, to me incomprehensible, world, in which nothing but this moral determination of the will shall possess efficient activity. What is it that is assumed in this conception?

Obviously a *Law;* a rule absolutely without exception, according to which a will determined by duty must have consequences; just as the material world which surrounds me I assume a law according to which this ball, when thrown by my hand with this particular force, in this particular direction, necessarily moves in such a direction with a certain degree of velocity,—perhaps strikes another ball with a certain amount of force, which in its turn moves on with a certain velocity,—and so on. As here, in the mere direction and motion of my hand, I already perceive and apprehend all the consequent directions and movements, with the same certainty as if they were already present before me; even so do I embrace by means of my virtuous will a series of necessary and inevitable consequences in the spiritual world, as if they were already present before me; only that I cannot define them as I do those in the material world,—that is, I only know ***that*** they must be, but not ***how*** they are not two thoughts, one of which arises by *Law* of the spiritual world, in which my pure will is one of the moving forces, as my hand is one of the moving forces of the material world. My own firm confidence in these results, and the conceptions of this

Law of the spiritual world, are one and the same;—they are not two thoughts, one of which arises by means of the other, but they are entirely the same thought; just as the confidence with which I calculate on a certain motion in a material body, and the conception of a mechanical law of nature on which that motion depends, are one and the same. The conception of a *Law* expresses nothing more than the firm, immovable confidence of reason in a principle, and the absolute impossibility of admitting its opposite.

I assume such a law of a spiritual world,—not given by my will nor by the will of any finite being, nor by the will of all finite beings taken together, but to which my will, and the will of all finite beings, is subject. Neither I, nor any finite and therefore sensuous being, can conceive how a mere will can have consequences, nor what may be the true nature of those consequences; for herein consists the essential character of our finite nature,—that we are unable to conceive this,—that having indeed our will, as such, wholly within our power, we are yet compelled by our sensuous nature to regard the consequences of that will as sensuous states:—how then can I, or any other finite being whatever, propose to ourselves as objects, and thereby give reality to, that which we can neither imagine nor conceive? I cannot say that, in the material world, my hand, or any other body which belongs to that world and is subject to the universal law of gravity, brings this law into operation;—these bodies themselves stand under this law, and are able to set another body in motion only in accordance with this law, and only in so far as that body, by virtue of this law, partakes of the universal moving power of

Nature. Just as little can a finite will give a law to the super-sensual world, which no finite spirit can embrace; but all finite wills stand under the law of that world, and can produce results therein only inasmuch as that law already exists, and inasmuch as they themselves, in accordance with the form of that law which is applicable to finite wills, bring themselves under its conditions, and within the sphere of its activity, by moral obedience;—by moral obedience, I say, the only tie which unites them to that higher world, the only nerve that descends from it to them, and the only organ through which they can re-act upon it. As the universal power of attraction embraces all bodies, and holds them together in themselves and with each other, and the movement of each separate body is possible only on the supposition of this power, so does that super-sensual law unite, hold together, and embrace all finite reasonable beings. My will, and the will of all finite beings, may be regarded from a double point of view:—partly as a mere *volition*, an internal act directed upon itself alone, and, in so far, the will is complete in itself, concluded in this act of volition;—partly as something beyond this, a *fact*. It assumes the latter form to me, as soon as I regard it as completed; but it must also become so beyond me:—in the world of sense, as the moving principle, for instance, of my hand, from the movement of which, again, other movements follow;—in the super-sensual world, as the principle of a series of spiritual consequences of which I have no conception. In the former point of view, as a mere act of volition, it stands wholly within my own power; its assumption of the latter character, that of an active first principle, depends not upon me, but on a law to which I myself

am subject;—on the law of nature in the world of sense, on a super-sensual law in the world of pure thought.

What, then, is this law of the spiritual world which I conceive? This idea now stands before me, in fixed and perfect shape; I cannot, and dare not add anything whatever to it; I have only to express and interpret it distinctly. It is obviously not such as I may suppose the principle of my own, or any other possible sensuous world, to be,—a fixed, inert existence, from which, by the encounter of a will, some internal power may be evolved,—something altogether different from a mere will. For,—and this is the substance of my belief,—my will, absolutely by itself, and without the intervention of any instrument that might weaken its expression, shall act in a perfectly congenial sphere,—reason upon reason, spirit upon spirit;—in a sphere to which nevertheless it does not give the law of life, activity, and progress, but which has that law in itself;—therefore, upon self-active reason. But self-active reason is will. The law of the super-sensual world must, therefore, be a Will:—A Will which operates purely as will; by itself, and absolutely without any instrument or sensible material of its activity; which is, at the same time, both act and product; with whom to will is to do, to command is to execute; in which therefore the instinctive demand of reason for absolute freedom and independence is realized:—A Will, which in itself is law; determined by no fancy or caprice, through no previous reflection, hesitation or doubt:—but eternal, unchangeable, on which we may securely and infallibly rely, as the physical man relies with certainty on the laws of his world:—A Will in which the moral will of finite

beings, and this alone, has sure and unfailing results; since for it all else is unavailing, all else is as if it were not.

That sublime Will thus pursues no solitary path withdrawn from the other parts of the world of reason. There is a spiritual bond between Him and all finite rational beings; and He himself is this spiritual bond of the rational universe. Let me will, purely and decidedly, my duty; and He wills that, in the spiritual world at least, my will shall prosper. Every moral resolution of a finite being goes up before Him, and—to speak after the manner of mortals—moves and determines Him, not in consequence of a momentary satisfaction, but in accordance with the eternal law of His being. With surprising clearness does this thought, which hitherto was surrounded with darkness, now reveal itself to my soul; the thought that my will, merely as such, and through itself, shall have results. It has results, because it is immediately and infallibly perceived by another Will to which it is related, which is its own accomplishment and the only living principle of the spiritual world; *in Him* it has its first results, and *through Him* it acquires an influence on the whole spiritual world, which throughout is but a product of that Infinite Will.

Thus do I approach—the mortal must speak in his own language—thus do I approach that Infinite Will; and the voice of conscience in my soul, which teaches me in every situation of life what I have there to do, is the channel through which again His influence descends upon me. That voice, sensualized by my environment, and translated into my language, is the oracle of the Eternal World which announces to me how I am to perform my part in the order of the

spiritual universe, or in the Infinite Will who is Himself that order. I cannot, indeed, survey or comprehend that spiritual order, and I need not to do so;—I am but a link in its chain, and can no more judge of the whole, than a single tone of music can judge of the entire harmony of which it forms a part. But what I myself ought to be in this harmony of spirits I must know, for it is only I myself who can make me so,—and this immediately revealed to me by a voice whose tones descend upon me from that other world. Thus do I stand connected with the ONE who alone has existence, and thus do I participate in His being. There is nothing real, lasting, imperishable in me, but these two elements:—the voice of conscience, and my free obedience. By the first, the spiritual world bows down to me, and embraces me as one of its members; by the second I raise myself into this world, apprehend it, and re-act upon it. That Infinite Will is the mediator between it and me; for He himself is the original source both of it and me. This is the one True and Imperishable for which my soul yearns even from its inmost depths; all else is mere appearance, ever vanishing, and ever returning in a new semblance.

This Will unites me with himself; He also unites me with all finite beings like myself, and is the common mediator between us all. This is the great mystery of the invisible world, and its fundamental law, in so far as it is a world or system of many individual wills:—*the union, and direct reciprocal action, of many separate and independent wills;* a mystery which already lies clearly before every eye in the present life, without

attracting the notice of any one, or being regarded as in any way wonderful. The voice of conscience, which imposes on each his particular duty, is the light-beam on which we come forth from the bosom of the Infinite, and assume our place as particular individual beings; it fixes the limits of our personality; it is thus the true original element of our nature, the foundation and material of all our life. The absolute freedom of the will, which we bring down with us from the Infinite into the world of Time, is the principle of this our life. I act:—and, the sensible intuition through which alone I become a personal intelligence being supposed, it is easy to conceive how I must necessarily know of this my action,—I know it, because it is I myself who act;—it is easy to conceive how, by means of this sensible intuition, my spiritual act appears to me as a fact in a world of sense; and how, on the other hand, by the same sensualization, the law of duty which, in itself, is a purely spiritual law, should appear to me as the command to such an action;—it is easy to conceive, how an actually present world should appear to me as the condition of this action, and, in part, as the consequence and product of it. Thus far I remain within myself and upon my own territory; everything here, which has an existence for me, unfolds itself purely and solely from myself; I see everywhere only myself, and no true existence out of myself. But in this my world I admit, also, the operations of other beings, separate and independent of me, as much as I of them. How these beings can themselves know of the influences which proceed from them, may easily be conceived; they know of them in the same way in which I know of my own. But how *I* can know of *them* is absolutely inconceivable; just as it is inconceivable how *they* can possess

that knowledge of *my* existence, and its manifestations, which nevertheless I ascribe to them. How do they come within my world, or I within theirs,—since the principle by which the consciousness of ourselves, of our operations, and of their sensuous conditions, is deduced from ourselves,—*i. e.*, that each individual must undoubtedly know what he himself does,—is here wholly inapplicable? How have free spirits knowledge of free spirits, since we know that free spirits are the only reality, and that an independent world of sense, through which they might act on each other, is no longer to be taken into account. Or shall it be said,—I perceive reasonable beings like myself by the changes which they produce in the world of sense? Then I ask again,—How dost thou perceive these changes? I comprehend very well how thou canst perceive changes which are brought about by the mere mechanism of nature; for the law of this mechanism is no other than the law of thy own thought, according to which, this world being once assumed, it is carried out into farther developments. But the changes of which we now speak are not brought about by the mere mechanism of nature, but by a free will elevated above all nature; and only in so far as thou canst regard them in this character, canst thou infer from them the existence of free beings like thyself. Where then is the law within thyself, according to which thou canst realize the determinations of other wills absolutely independent of thee? In short, this mutual recognition and reciprocal action of free beings in this world, is perfectly inexplicable by the laws of nature or of thought, and can be explained only through the One in whom they are united, although to each other they are separate; through the Infinite Will who sustains and embraces

them all in His own sphere. Not immediately from thee to me, nor from me to thee, flows forth the knowledge which we have of each other;—we are separated by an insurmountable barrier. Only through the common fountain of our spiritual being do we know of each other; only in Him do we recognise each other, and influence each other. "Here reverence the image of freedom upon the earth;—here, a work which bears its impress:"—thus is it proclaimed within me by the voice of that Will, which speaks to me only in so far as it imposes duties upon me;—and the only principle through which I recognise thee and thy work, is the command of conscience to respect them.

Whence, then, our feelings, our sensible intuitions, our discursive laws of thought, on all which is founded the external world which we behold, in which we believe that we exert an influence on each other? With respect to the two last—our sensible intuitions and our laws of thought—to say, these are laws of reason in itself, is only to give no satisfactory answer at all. For us, indeed, who are excluded from the pure domain of reason in itself, it may be impossible to think otherwise, or to conceive of reason under any other law. But the true law of reason in itself is the practical law, the law of the super-sensual world, or of that sublime Will. And, leaving this for a moment undecided, whence comes our universal agreement as to feelings, which, nevertheless, are something positive, immediate, inexplicable? On this agreement in feeling, perception, and in the laws of thought, however, it depends that we all behold the same external world.

"It is a harmonious, although inconceivable, limitation of the infinite rational beings who compose our race; and only by means of such a harmonious limita-

tion do they become a race: "—thus answers the philosophy of mere knowledge, and here it must rest as its highest point. But what can set a limit to reason but reason itself?—what can limit all finite reason but the Infinite Reason? This universal agreement concerning a sensible world,—assumed and accepted by us as the foundation of all our other life, and as the sphere of our duty—which, strictly considered, is just as incomprehensible as our unanimity concerning the products of our reciprocal freedom,—this agreement is the result of the One Eternal Infinite Will. Our faith, of which we have spoken as faith in duty, is only faith in Him, in His reason, in His truth. What, then, is the peculiar and essential truth which we accept in the world of sense, and in which we believe? Nothing less than that from our free and faithful performance of our duty in this world, there will arise to us throughout eternity a life in which our freedom and morality may still continue their development. If this be true, then indeed is there truth in our world, and the only truth possible for finite beings; and it must be true, for this world is the result of the Eternal Will in us,—and that Will, by the law of His own being, can have no other purpose with respect to finite beings, than that which we have set forth.

That Eternal Will is thus assuredly the Creator of the World, in the only way in which He can be so, and in the only way in which it needs creation:—in the finite reason. Those who regard Him as building up a world from an everlasting inert matter, which must still remain inert and lifeless,—like a vessel made by human hands, not an eternal procession of His self-development,—or who ascribe to Him the production of a material universe out of nothing, know neither

the world nor Him. If matter only can be reality, then were the world indeed nothing, and throughout all eternity would remain nothing. Reason alone exists:—the Infinite in Himself,—the finite in Him and through Him. Only in our minds has He created a world; at least that *from which* we unfold it, and that *by which* we unfold it;—the voice of duty, and harmonious feelings, intuitions, and laws of thought. It is His light through which we behold the light, and all that it reveals to us. In our minds He still creates this world, and acts upon it by acting upon our minds through the call of duty, as soon as another free being changes aught therein. In our minds He upholds this world, and thereby the finite existence of which alone we are capable, by continually evolving from each state of our existence other states in succession. When He shall have sufficiently proved us according to His supreme designs, for our next succeeding vocation, and we shall have sufficiently cultivated ourselves for entering upon it, then, by that which we call death, will He annihilate for us this life, and introduce us to a new life, the product of our virtuous actions. All our life is His life. We are in His hand, and abide therein, and no one can pluck us out of His hand. We are eternal, because He is eternal.

Sublime and Living Will! named by no name, compassed by no thought! I may well raise my soul to Thee, for Thou and I are not divided. Thy voice sounds within me, mine resounds in Thee; and all my thoughts, if they be but good and true, live in Thee also. In Thee, the Incomprehensible, I myself, and the world in which I live, become clearly comprehensible to me; all the secrets of my existence are laid open, and perfect harmony arises in my soul.

Thou art best known to the child-like, devoted, simple mind. To it Thou art the searcher of hearts, who seest its inmost depths; the ever-present true witness of its thoughts, who knowest its truth, who knowest it though all the world know it not. Thou art the Father who ever desirest its good, who rulest all things for the best. To Thy will it unhesitatingly resigns itself: "Do with me," it says, "what thou wilt; I know that it is good, for it is Thou who doest it." The inquisitive understanding, which has heard of Thee, but seen Thee not, would teach us thy nature; and as Thy image, shows us a monstrous and incongruous shape, which the sagacious laugh at, and the wise and good abhor.

I hide my face before Thee, and lay my hand upon my mouth. *How* Thou art, and seemest to Thine own being, I can never know, any more than I can assume Thy nature. After thousands upon thousands of spirit-lives, I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now in this earthly house. That which I conceive becomes finite through my very conception of it; and this can never, even by endless exaltation, rise into the Infinite. Thou differest from men, not in degree but in nature. In every stage of their advancement they think of Thee as a greater *man*, and still a greater; but never as God—the Infinite,—whom no measure can mete. I have only this discursive, progressive thought, and I can conceive of no other:—how can I venture to ascribe it to Thee? In the Idea of *person* there are imperfections, limitations:—how can I clothe Thee with it without these?

I will not attempt that which the imperfection of my finite nature forbids, and which would be useless to me:—*How* Thou art, I may not know. But, let me

be what I ought to be, and Thy relations to me—the mortal—and to all mortals, lie open before my eyes, and surround me more clearly than the consciousness of my own existence. *Thou workest* in me the knowledge of my duty, of my vocation in the world of reasonable beings;—*how,* I know not, nor need I to know. *Thou knowest* what I think and what I will:—*how* Thou canst know, through what act thou bringest about that consciousness, I cannot understand,—nay, I know that the idea of an act, of a particular act of consciousness, belongs to me alone, and not to Thee,—the Infinite One. *Thou willest* that my free obedience shall bring with it eternal consequences:—the act of Thy will I cannot comprehend, I only know that it is not like mine. *Thou doest,* and Thy will itself is the deed; but the way of Thy working is not as my ways,—I cannot trace it. *Thou livest and art,* for Thou knowest and willest and workest, omnipresent to finite Reason; but Thou *art not* as *I* now and always must conceive of being.

In the contemplation of these Thy relations to me, the finite being, will I rest in calm blessedness. I know immediately only what I ought to do. This will I do, freely, joyfully, and without cavilling or sophistry, for it is Thy voice which commands me to do it; it is the part assigned to me in the spiritual World-plan; and the power with which I shall perform it is Thy power. Whatever may be commanded by that voice, whatever executed by that power, is, in that plan, assuredly and truly good. I remain tranquil amid all the events of this world, for they are in Thy world. Nothing can perplex or surprise or dishearten me, as surely as Thou

livest, and I can look upon Thy life. For in Thee, and through Thee, O Infinite One! do I behold even my present world in another light. Nature, and natural consequences, in the destinies and conduct of free beings, as opposed to Thee, become empty, unmeaning words. Nature is no longer; Thou, only Thou, art. It no longer appears to me to be the end and purpose of the present world to produce that state of universal peace among men, and of unlimited dominion over the mechanism of nature, for its own sake alone,—but that this should be produced by man himself,—and, since it is expected from *all,* that it should be produced by *all,* as one great, free, moral, community. Nothing new and better for an individual shall be attainable, except through his own virtuous will; nothing new and better for a community, except through the common will being in accordance with duty:—this is a fundamental law of the great moral empire, of which the present life is a part. The good will of the individual is thus often lost to this world, because it is but the will of the individual, and the will of the majority is not in harmony with his,—and then its results are to be found solely in a future world; while even the passions and vices of men coöperate in the attainment of good,—not in and for themselves, for in this sense good can never come out of evil,—but by holding the balance against the opposite vices, and, at last, by their excess, annihilating these antagonists, and themselves with them. Oppression could never have gained the upper hand in human affairs, unless the cowardice, baseness, and mutual mistrust of men had smoothed the way to it. It will continue to increase, until it extirpate cowardice and slavishness; and despair itself at last reawaken courage. Then shall the two opposite vices

have annihilated each other, and the noblest of all human relations, lasting freedom, come forth from their antagonism.

The actions of free beings, strictly considered, have results only in other free beings; for in them, and for them alone, there is a world; and that in which they all agree, is itself the world. But they have these results only through the Infinite Will,—the medium through which all individual beings influence each other. But the announcement, the publication of this Will to us, is always a call to a particular duty. Thus even what we call evil in the world, the consequence of the abuse of freedom, exists only through Him; and it exists for those who experience it only in so far as, through it, duties are laid upon them. Were it not in the eternal plan of our moral culture, and the culture of our whole race, that precisely these duties should be laid upon us, they would not be so laid upon us; and that through which they are laid upon us—*i. e.* what we call evil—would not have been produced. In so far, everything that is, is good, and absolutely legitimate. There is but one world possible,—a thoroughly good world. All that happens in this world is subservient to the improvement and culture of man, and, by means of this, to the promotion of the purpose of his earthly existence. It is this higher World-plan which we call Nature, when we say,—Nature leads men through want to industry; through the evils of general disorder to a just constitution; through the miseries of continual wars to endless peace on earth. Thy will, O Infinite One! thy Providence alone, is this higher Nature. This, too, is best understood by artless simplicity, when it regards this life as a place of trial and culture, as a school for eternity; when, in all

the events of life, the most trivial as well as the most important, it beholds thy guiding Providence disposing all for the best; when it firmly believes that all things must work together for the good of those who love their duty, and who know Thee.

Oh! I have, indeed, dwelt in darkness during the past days of my life! I have indeed heaped error upon error, and imagined myself wise! Now, for the first time, do I wholly understand the doctrine which from thy lips, O Wonderful Spirit! seemed so strange to me, although my understanding had nothing to oppose to it; for now, for the first time, do I comprehend it in its whole compass, in its deepest foundations, and through all its consequences.

Man is not a product of the world of sense, and the end of his existence cannot be attained in it. His vocation transcends Time and Space, and everything that pertains to sense. What he is, and to what he is to train himself, that he must know;—as his vocation is a lofty one, he must be able to raise his thoughts above all the limitations of sense. He must accomplish it:—where his being finds its home, there his thoughts too seek their dwelling-place; and the truly human mode of thought, that which alone is worthy of him, that in which his whole spiritual strength is manifested, is that whereby he raises himself above those limitations, whereby all that pertains to sense vanishes into nothing,—into a mere reflection, in mortal eyes, of the One, Self-existent Infinite.

Many have raised themselves to this mode of thought, without scientific inquiry, merely by their nobleness of heart and their pure moral instinct, be-

cause their life has been preëminently one of feeling and sentiment. They have denied, by their conduct, the efficiency and reality of the world of sense, and made it of no account in regulating their resolutions and their actions;—whereby they have not indeed made it clear, by reasoning, that this world has no existence for the intellect. Those who could dare to say, "Our citizenship is in heaven; we have here no continuing city, but we seek one to come;"—those whose chief principle it was "to die to the world, to be born again, and already here below to enter upon a new life,"—certainly set no value whatever on the things of sense, and were, to use the language of the schools, practical Transcendental Idealists.

Others, who, besides possessing the natural proneness to mere sensuous activity which is common to us all, have also added to its power by the adoption of similar habits of thought, until they have got wholly entangled in it, and it has grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength, can raise themselves above it, permanently and completely, only by persistent and conclusive thought; otherwise, with the purest moral intentions, they would be continually drawn down again by their understanding, and their whole being would remain a prolonged and insoluble contradiction. For these, the philosophy which I now, for the first time, thoroughly understand, will be the first power that shall set free the imprisoned Psyche and unfold her wings, so that, hovering for a moment above her former self, she may cast a glance on her abandoned slough, and then soar upwards thenceforward to live and move in higher spheres.

Blessed be the hour in which I first resolved to inquire into myself and my vocation! All my doubts are solved; I know what I can know, and have no apprehensions regarding that which I cannot know. I am satisfied; perfect harmony and clearness reign in my soul, and a new and more glorious spiritual existence begins for me.

My entire complete vocation I cannot comprehend; what I shall be hereafter transcends all my thoughts. A part of that vocation is concealed from me; it is visible only to One, to the Father of Spirits, to whose care it is committed. I know only that it is sure, and that it is eternal and glorious like Himself. But that part of it which is confided to myself, I know, and know it thoroughly, for it is the root of all my other knowledge. I know assuredly, in every moment of my life, what I ought to do; and this is my whole vocation in so far as it depends on me. From this point, since my knowledge does not reach beyond it, I shall not depart; I shall not desire to know aught beyond this; I shall take my stand upon this central point, and firmly root myself here. To this shall all my thoughts and endeavours, my whole powers, be directed; my whole existence shall be interwoven with it.

I ought, as far as in me lies, to cultivate my understanding and to acquire knowledge;—but only with the purpose of preparing thereby within me a larger field and wider sphere of duty. I ought to desire to have much;—in order that much may be required of me. I ought to exercise my powers and capacities in every possible way;—but only in order to render myself a more serviceable and fitting instrument of duty, for until the commandment shall have been realized

in the outward world, by means of my whole personality, I am answerable for it to my conscience. I ought to exhibit in myself, as far as I am able, humanity in all its completeness;—not for the mere sake of humanity, which in itself has not the slightest worth, but in order that virtue, which alone has worth in itself, may be exhibited in its highest perfection in human nature. I ought to regard myself, body and soul, with all that is in me or that belongs to me, only as a means of duty; and only be solicitous to fulfil that, and to make myself able to fulfil it, as far as in me lies. But when the commandment,—provided only that it shall have been in truth the commandment which I have obeyed, and I have been really conscious only of the pure, single intention of obeying it,—when the commandment shall have passed beyond my personal being to its realization in the outward world, then I have no more anxiety about it, for thenceforward it is committed into the hands of the Eternal Will. Farther care or anxiety would be but idle self-torment; would be unbelief and distrust of that Infinite Will. I shall never dream of governing the world in His stead; of listening to the voice of my own imperfect wisdom instead of to His voice in my conscience; or of substituting the partial views of a short-sighted creature for His vast plan which embraces the universe. I know that thereby I should lose my own place in His order, and in the order of all spiritual being.

As with calmness and devotion I reverence this higher Providence, so in my actions ought I to reverence the freedom of other beings around me. The question for me is not what they, according to my conceptions, ought to do, but what I may venture to do in order to induce them to do it. I can only desire

to act on their conviction and their will as far as the order of society and their own consent will permit; but by no means, without their conviction and consent, to influence their powers and relations. They do what they do on their own responsibility; with this I neither can nor dare intermeddle, and the Eternal Will will dispose all for the best. It concerns me more to respect their freedom, than to hinder or prevent what to me seems evil in its use.

In this point of view I become a new creature, and my whole relations to the existing world are changed. The ties by which my mind was formerly united to this world, and by whose secret guidance I followed all its movements, are for ever sundered, and I stand free, calm and immovable, a universe to myself. No longer through my affections, but by my eye alone, do I apprehend outward objects and am connected with them; and this eye itself is purified by freedom, and looks through error and deformity to the True and Beautiful, as upon the unruffled surface of water shapes are more purely mirrored in a milder light.

My mind is for ever closed against embarrassment and perplexity, against uncertainty, doubt, and anxiety;—my heart, against grief, repentance and desire. There is but one thing that I may know,—namely, what I ought to do; and this I always know infallibly. Concerning all else I know nothing, and know that I know nothing. I firmly root myself in this my ignorance, and refrain from harassing myself with conjectures concerning that of which I know nothing. No occurrence in this world can affect me either with joy or sorrow; calm and unmoved I look down upon all

things, for I know that I cannot explain a single event, nor comprehend its connexion with that which alone concerns me. All that happens belongs to the plan of the Eternal World, and is good in its place: thus much I know;—what in this plan is pure gain, what is only a means for the removal of some existing evil, what therefore ought to afford me more or less satisfaction, I know not. In His world all things prosper;—this satisfies me, and in this belief I stand fast as a rock;—but what in His world is merely the germ, what the blossom, and what the fruit itself, I know not.

The only matter in which I can be concerned is the progress of reason and morality in the world of reasonable beings; and this only for its own sake,—for the sake of this progress. Whether I or some one else be the instrument of this progress, whether it be my deed or that of another which prospers or is prevented, is of no importance to me. I regard myself merely as one of the instruments for carrying out the purpose of reason; I respect, love, or feel an interest in myself only as such an instrument, and desire the successful issue of my deed only in so far as it promotes this purpose. In like manner, I regard all the events of this world only with reference to this one purpose; whether they proceed from me or from others, whether they relate directly to me or to others. My breast is steeled against annoyance on account of personal offences and vexations, or exultation in personal merit; for my whole personality has disappeared in the contemplation of the purpose of my being.

Should it ever seem to me as if truth had been put to silence, and virtue expelled from the world; as if folly and vice had now summoned all their powers, and even assumed the place of reason and true wis-

dom;—should it happen, that just when all good men looked with hope for the regeneration of the human race, everything should become even worse than it had been before;—should the work, well and happily begun, on which the eyes of all true-minded men were fixed with joyous expectation, suddenly and unexpectedly be changed into the vilest forms of evil,—these things will not disturb me; and as little will I be persuaded to indulge in idleness, neglect, or false security, on account of an apparent rapid growth of enlightenment, a seeming diffusion of freedom and independence, an increase of more gentle manners, peacefulness, docility, and general moderation among men, as if now everything were attained. Thus it appears to me; or rather it is so, for it is actually so to me; and I know in both cases, as indeed I know in all possible cases, what I have next to do. As to everything else, I rest in the most perfect tranquillity, for I know nothing whatever about any other thing. Those, to me, so sorrowful events may, in the plan of the Eternal One, be the direct means for the attainment of a good result;—that strife of evil against good may be their last decisive struggle, and it may be permitted to the former to assemble all its powers for this encounter only to lose them, and thereby to exhibit itself in all its impotence. These, to me, joyful appearances may rest on very uncertain foundations;—what I had taken for enlightenment may perhaps be but hollow superficiality, and aversion to all true ideas; what I had taken for independence but unbridled passion; what I had taken for gentleness and moderation but weakness and indolence. I do not indeed know this, but it might be so; and then I should have as little cause to mourn over the one as to rejoice over the other. But I do

know, that I live in a world which belongs to the Supreme Wisdom and Goodness, who thoroughly comprehends its plan, and will infallibly accomplish it; and in this conviction I rest, and am blessed.

That there are free beings, destined to reason and morality, who strive against reason, and call forth all their powers to the support of folly and vice;—just as little will this disturb me, and stir up within me indignation and wrath. The perversity which would hate what is good because it is good, and promote evil merely from a love of evil as such,—this perversity which alone could excite my just anger, I ascribe to no one who bears the form of man, for I know that it does not lie in human nature. I know that for all who act thus, there is really, in so far as they act thus, neither good nor evil, but only an agreeable or disagreeable feeling; that they do not stand under their own dominion, but under the power of Nature; and that it is not themselves, but this nature in them, which seeks the former and flies from the latter with all its strength without regard to whether it be otherwise good or evil. I know that being, once for all, what they are, they cannot act in any respect otherwise than as they do act, and I am very far from getting angry with necessity, or indulging in wrath against blind and unconscious Nature. Herein truly lies their guilt and unworthiness that they are what they are; and that, in place of being free and independent, they have resigned themselves to the current of mere natural impulse.

It is this alone which could excite my indignation; but here I should fall into absolute absurdity. I cannot call them to account for their want of freedom, without first attributing to them the power of making

themselves free. I wish to be angry with them, and find no object for my wrath. What they actually are, does not deserve my anger; what might deserve it, they are not, and they would not deserve it, if they were. My displeasure would strike an impalpable nonentity. I must indeed always treat them, and address them, as if they were what I well know they are not; I must always suppose in them that whereby alone I can approach them and communicate with them. Duty commands me to act towards them according to a conception of them the opposite of that which I arrive at by contemplating them. And thus it may certainly happen that I turn towards them with a noble indignation, as if they were free, in order to arouse within them a similar indignation against themselves,—an indignation which in my own heart I cannot reasonably entertain. It is only the practical man of society within me whose anger is excited by folly and vice; not the contemplative man who reposes undisturbed in the calm serenity of his own spirit.

Should I be visited by corporeal suffering, pain, or disease, I cannot avoid *feeling* them, for they are accidents of my nature; and as long as I remain here below, I am a part of Nature. But they shall not *grieve* me. They can only touch the nature with which, in a wonderful manner, I am united,—not myself, the being exalted above all Nature. The sure end of all pain, and of all sensibility to pain, is death; and of all things which the mere natural man is wont to regard as evils, this is to me the least. I shall not die to myself, but only to others; to those who remain behind, from whose fellowship I am torn:—for myself the hour of Death is the hour of Birth to a new, more excellent life.

Now that my heart is closed against all desire for earthly things, now that I have no longer any sense for the transitory and perishable, the universe appears before my eyes clothed in a more glorious form. The dead heavy mass, which only filled up space, has vanished; and in its place there flows onward, with the rushing music of mighty waves, an eternal stream of life and power and action, which issues from the original Source of all life—from Thy Life, O Infinite One; for all life is Thy Life, and only the religious eye penetrates to the realm of True Beauty.

I am related to Thee, and what I behold around me is related to me; all is life and blessedness, and regards me with bright spirit-eyes, and speaks with spirit-voices to my heart. In all the forms that surround me, I behold the reflection of my own being, broken up into countless diversified shapes, as the morning sun, broken in a thousand dewdrops, sparkles towards itself.

Thy Life, as alone the finite mind can conceive it, is self-forming, self-manifesting Will:—this Life, clothed to the eye of the mortal with manifold sensuous forms, flows forth through me, and throughout the immeasurable universe of Nature. *Here* it streams as self-creating and self-forming matter through my veins and muscles, and pours its abundance into the tree, the flower, the grass. Creative life flows forth in one continuous stream, drop on drop, through all forms and into all places where my eye can follow it; and reveals itself to me, in a different shape in each various corner of the universe, as the same power by which in secret darkness my own frame was formed. *There,* in free play, it leaps and dances as spontaneous motion in the animal, and manifests itself in each new

form as a new, peculiar, self-subsisting world:—the same power which, invisibly to me, moves and animates my own frame. Everything that lives and moves follows this universal impulse, this one principle of all motion, which, from one end of the universe to the other, guides the harmonious movement;—in the animal *without freedom;* in me, from whom in the visible world the motion proceeds although it has not its source in me, *with freedom.*

But pure and holy, and as near to Thine own nature as aught can be to mortal eye, does this Thy Life flow forth as the bond which unites spirit with spirit, as the breath and atmosphere of a rational world, unimaginable and incomprehensible, and yet there, clearly visible to the spiritual eye. Borne onward in this stream of light, thought floats from soul to soul, without pause or variation, and returns purer and brighter from each kindred mind. Through this mysterious union does each individual perceive, understand, and love himself only in another; every soul develops itself only by means of other souls, and there are no longer individual men, but only one humanity; no individual thought, or love, or hate, but only thought, love, and hate, in and through each other. Through this wondrous influence the affinity of spirits in the invisible world permeates even their physical nature;—manifests itself in two sexes, which, even if that spiritual bond could be torn asunder, would, simply as creatures of nature, be compelled to love each other;—flows forth in the tenderness of parents and children, brothers and sisters, as if the souls were of one blood like the bodies, and their minds were branches and blossoms of the same stem;—and from these, embraces, in narrower or wider circles, the

whole sentient world. Even at the root of their hate, there lies a secret thirst after love; and no enmity springs up but from friendship denied.

Through that which to others seems a mere dead mass, my eye beholds this eternal life and movement in every vein of sensible and spiritual Nature, and sees this life rising in ever increasing growth, and ever purifying itself to a more spiritual expression. The universe is to me no longer that ever-recurring circle, that eternally-repeated play, that monster swallowing itself up, only to bring itself forth again as it was before;—it has become transfigured before me, and now bears the one stamp of spiritual life—a constant progress towards higher perfection in a line that runs out into the Infinite.

The sun rises and sets, the stars sink and reappear, the spheres hold their circle-dance;—but they never return again as they disappeared, and even in the bright fountain of life itself there is life and progress. Every hour which they lead on, every morning and every evening, sinks with new increase upon the world; new life and new love descend from the spheres like dew-drops from the clouds, and encircle nature as the cool night the earth.

All Death in Nature is Birth, and in Death itself appears visibly the exaltation of Life. There is no destructive principle in Nature, for Nature throughout is pure, unclouded Life; it is not Death which kills, but the more living Life, which, concealed behind the former, bursts forth into new development. Death and Birth are but the struggle of Life with itself to assume a more glorious and congenial form. And *my* death,—how can it be aught else, since I am not a mere show and semblance of life, but bear within me

the one original, true, and essential Life? It is impossible to conceive that Nature should annihilate a life which does not proceed from her;—the Nature which exists for me, and not I for her.

Yet even my natural life, even this mere outward manifestation to mortal sight of the inward invisible Life, she cannot destroy without destroying herself;—she who only exists for me, and on account of me, and exists not if I am not. Even because she destroys me must she animate me anew; it is only my Higher Life, unfolding itself in her, before which my present life can disappear; and what mortals call Death is the visible appearance of this second Life. Did no reasonable being who had once beheld the light of this world die, there would be no ground to look with faith for a new heavens and a new earth; the only possible purpose of Nature, to manifest and maintain Reason, would be fulfilled here below, and her circle would be completed. But the very act by which she consigns a free and independent being to death, is her own solemn entrance, intelligible to all Reason, into a region beyond this act itself, and beyond the whole sphere of existence which is thereby closed. Death is the ladder by which my spiritual vision rises to a new Life and a new Nature.

Every one of my fellow-creatures who leaves this earthly brotherhood and whom my spirit cannot regard as annihilated because he is my brother, draws my thoughts after him beyond the grave;—he is still, and to him belongs a place. While we mourn for him here below, as in the dim realms of unconsciousness there might be mourning when a man bursts from them into the light of this world's sun,—above there is rejoicing that a man is born into that world, as we

citizens of the earth receive with joy those who are born unto us. When I shall one day follow, it will be but joy for me; sorrow shall remain behind in the sphere I shall have left.

The world on which but now I gazed with wonder passes away from before me and sinks from my sight. With all the fulness of life, order, and increase which I beheld in it, it is yet but the curtain by which a world infinitely more perfect is concealed from me, and the germ from which that other shall develop itself. My FAITH looks behind this veil, and cherishes and animates this germ. It sees nothing definite, but it expects more than it can conceive here below, more than it will ever be able to conceive in all time.

Thus do I live, thus am I, and thus am I unchangeable, firm, and completed for all Eternity;—for this is no existence assumed from without,—it is my own, true, essential Life and Being.

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